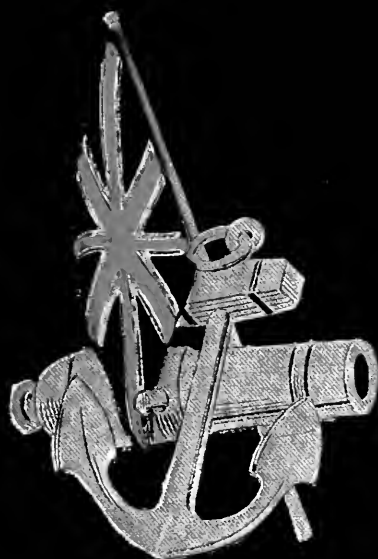


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Britannia's Bulwarks.



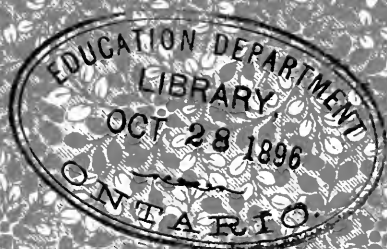
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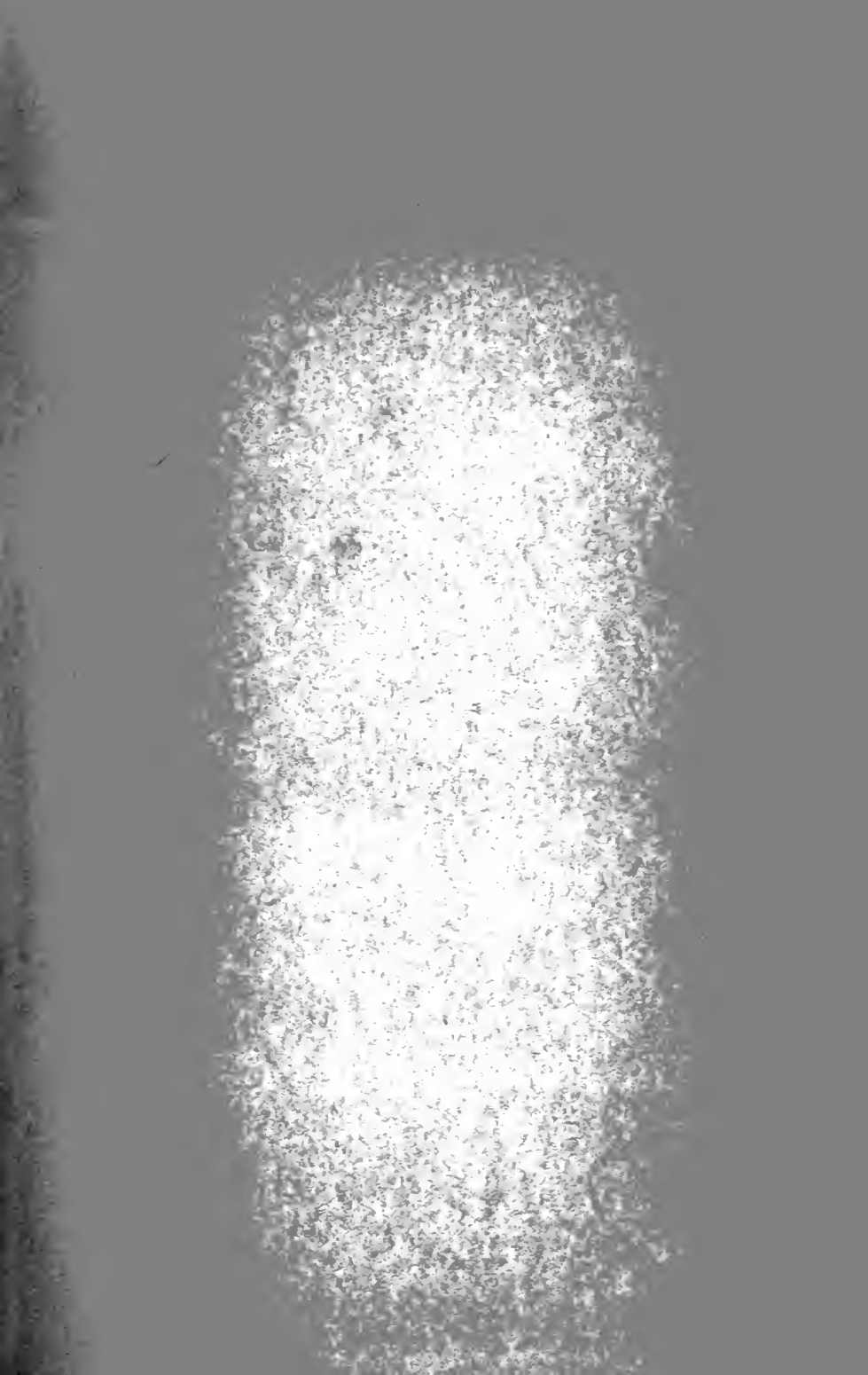
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An Historical Poem,

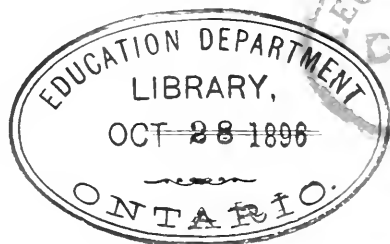
DESCRIPTIVE OF THE DEEDS

OF THE

BRITISH NAVY.

BY

CHARLES RATHBONE LOWN



LONDON:

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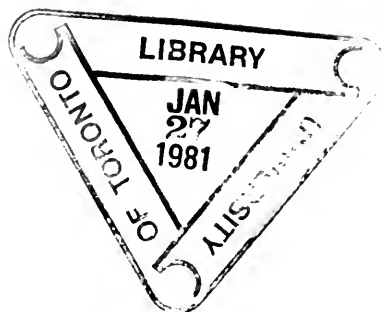
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26

Dedication

TO THE
OFFICERS, SEAMEN AND MARINES
OF THE
BRITISH NAVY,
PAST AND PRESENT.

BRITANNIA'S bulwarks, once of wood,
In olden times the world withstood,
 Though leagued 'gainst her in arms ;
And in our age, when clad in mail
And moved by steam instead of sail,
 As in those palmy days,
They will in battle's hour prevail
O'er all who may our Isle assail,
 Provided, that's to say,
The valour, skill, and ancient fire
Be but transmitted from the sire
 To sons as bold as he.
This song I dedicate to those
Who triumphed over England's foes
 From Sluys to Tráfalgàr ;
But chiefly to the men who died
In the full flood of victory's tide,
 Or, in disaster's hour,

When battling hard 'gainst heavy odds
(Like Curtius, who, to appease the gods,
Sprang in the yawning gulf) ;
And also, gallant souls ! to you,
Whose bones the sea's expanse bestrew,
A countless multitude ;
And to the living who, no less,
In times of future storm and stress,
Will not betray their trust.
I will a tale unfold of these
Sea warriors and their victories,
Achieved in every clime,
The like of which was never known
Since first at sea a flag was flown
Or sail has wooed the breeze ;
And may some future bard rehearse
The battles yet unfought, in verse
More worthy of the theme !
To you, then, sons of Neptune ! one
Who served beneath an Eastern sun
From China to the Cape,
Now humbly consecrates these lays,
A tribute from his muse in praise
Of heroes passed away !

PREFACE.

THE task of recording the achievements of the greatest Navy that ever made the ocean its home and battleground, has been to me truly a labour of love, and, indeed, the subject is one calculated to fire the imagination of the dullest, and fill with pride the least patriotic of Britons. I claim for this narrative of the deeds of the British Navy* that, though written in rhymed verse,—the exigencies of which have been compared to “dancing in fetters,”—it is fairly complete. But, while giving a general survey of events, I have enlarged on such dramatic incidents as afford special scope for effective poetic treatment. Among these episodes I would instance the Defeat of the Spanish Armada; the loss of the *Regent* by fire, and of the *Ramillies* by wreck; the actions between the *Brunswick* and *Vengeur*, *Sybille* and *Forte*, *Blanche* and *Pique*, and *Shannon* and *Chesapeake*; the destruction of the *Orient*,

* The author may claim some knowledge of his subject as he has written “Battles of the British Navy” (Routledge, 1872)—of which many editions, the last bringing the book up to date, have been published—a complete history, and not, as its name would imply (for which the publishers are responsible), an episodic work. Also, “Her Majesty’s Navy” (three vols., Vertue, 1894), an Illustrated History; and “The History of the Indian Navy” (two vols., Bentley, 1878), published by subscription, and subsidised by the India Office.

and the cutting-out of the *Chevette*.* I would also draw attention to the sketches of the Naval Officer of the Trunnion School, at the end of the Third Canto, and of his shipmate of the lower-deck at the close of the Seventh; to Nelson's final departure from Portsmouth, and the morn of Trafalgar (pages 155-160); and to the descriptions of the *Victory* getting under way, at the end of the poem, and of a typical scene of shipwreck concluding the Sixth Canto. The career of Nelson has been treated in a separate Canto, and the battles of St. Vincent, the Nile, Copenhagen, and, more especially, Trafalgar, with the hero's death, have been detailed with a fulness proportionate to their importance and dramatic interest. The history proper concludes with the Seventh Canto, and the remainder of the work, forming the second Book, is devoted to brief memorial notices of distinguished officers, and the record of the services of celebrated line-of-battle ships and frigates. This last part, involving much research, has never before been attempted, even in prose, while a special feature, to which I would draw particular attention, is the sketches of the mythological personages and classical celebrities, after whom the ships derive their names, which almost read like a versified "Lemprière's Dictionary," and I trust will not be considered inappropriate in a work of this character.

C. R. LOW.

82, ELSHAM ROAD, KENSINGTON, W.

4th December, 1894.

* An Index at the end, of proper names, will facilitate any reference by the reader.

"BRITANNIA'S BULWARKS."

CANTO I.

INTRODUCTION:—Sluys and Harfleur—Drake and Howard—
Defeat of the Spanish Armada—Raleigh—Career of Blake—
Tunis, Malaga, and Teneriffe—His Battles with Van Tromp
and de Ruyter—Death of Blake—The Second and Third
Dutch Wars—Monk, Ayscue, Rupert, Lawson, and Penn—
Battles in the Channel and off Lowestoft and Southwold Bay—
Sandwich, Myngs, Berkeley, and Sprague, and how they died

I.

The bard of Scios tuned his lyre
To chant the praise, with matchless fire,
Of those who fought at Troy—
As Agamemnon, "King of Men,"
Who led the hosts of Hellas when
They sailed for Ilium's shore;
And Hector, foremost of the band
Who struggled long to guard the land
Against their Grecian foes;
And he, the "Swift of Foot,"—whose blade
The yet unconquered hero laid
Submissive in the dust—
Achilles, bravest of the brave,
Whose crest was highest on the wave
Of battle surging round
For many years those leaguered walls :—
Each one of these to mind recalls,
And others scarcely less.

Heroic deeds of classic days,
Which find in Homer's Iliad praise
And immortality.
But yet more famed than all of these
For their unnumbered victories
Are England's sailor sons,
A race whose valour to extol,
And every battle here enrol,
Be now my pleasing task.
This land will ne'er decadence show,
Or foot of foreign conqueror know,
While to herself she's true—
(As Shakspeare says); but on the sea
We must retain supremacy
If still we'd have this so,
And make our fleet's predominance
Unquestioned o'er the ships of France
And any other Power.
'Twas ever thus when she and Spain,
Encountered singly, or again
Combined, our Navy met,
With both the Dutchman and the Dane.
Who sought to overthrow in vain
Our old ascendancy.
The Corsairs, Moor and Algerine,
Have equally our sailors seen
In triumph sweep the seas;
And all the monarchs of the North
Have learned to own the martial worth
At their expense displayed.
The Swedish Charles, the Russian Paul,
And Peter, greatest of them all,
With Christian, Denmark's King,
Their prowess witnessed on the brine.
As did the Empress Catherine,
When Norris led, and Byng;

And Philip, second of his name,
With his Armada felt the shame
Defeat inflicts, and he,
The Fourteenth Louis, France's King.
No less endured the rankling sting,
With many of his line.
The Turk and the Egyptian, too,
At Navarin and Acre knew
The sound of British guns ;
And Buonaparte—who towered like Saul
Among the Prophets—owed his fall
To our victorious fleet,
And oft in bitterness declared
That he invasion would have dared
Could but “ six hours' command ”
Be his of Albion's silver streak
Of sea, when full revenge he'd wreak
For all his past defeats,
And England's might in pieces break.
And henceforth this our island make
An appanage of France.
So in the zenith of his power,
When triumph crowned his arms, that hour
Old Hyder Ali cried :
“ I may these English crush on land,
But vain my efforts while command
Their Navy holds afloat ! ”
From Pole to Pole, from East to West,
Now Britain's claims unchallenged rest
To be supreme at sea !

II.

When first for France our Edward steered,
Off Sluys the English fleet appeared
And battled with the foe,

Of whom were thirty thousand slain,
And o'er four hundred vessels ta'en
 (Or so the records say),
And glorious for our English crews
The victory was they gained at Sluys,
 Our first and greatest one ! *
When Harry sailed the French to meet,
His troops embarked on board a fleet
 Of sixteen hundred craft,
"With silken streamers " spread aloft
(So wrote the bard) the zephyrs soft
 To woo in their embrace ;
And when he won at Agincourt
Harfleur our Gallic foemen sought,
 But vainly, to retake,
For while we held their seaport towns,
From Lizard Point unto the Downs,
 Our Navy rode supreme.

III.

Hail, Drake ! who curbed the Spanish pride,
And checked Iberia's rising tide
 Of triumph when she launched
The great Armada's countless train
From all her ports upon the main
 To subjugate our isle.
Behold ! the signal fires are lit,
And English hearts together knit
 With resolution stern

* The battle of Sluys, by giving England the command of the sea, determined the course of the war which followed, and ended in Cressy and Poitiers, thus demonstrating for the first time the necessity to us of "sea-power," of which the defeat of the Spanish Armada and Trafalgar afforded still more striking examples.

In freedom's cause to smite a blow,
And let the foreign despot know
They spurned his hated yoke.
At length had struck the wished-for hour
To shatter, past amend, the power
Of Philip's proud Marine,
And Europe's infant navies teach
The lesson, since acquired by each
With painful certitude,
That Britons on the Ocean reign
And who would seek from her domain
Britannia to dethrone,
A fleet must boast as yet unknown,
And such a race of seamen own
As we alone possess !

IV.

From every headland on the steep
The live-long night the beacons keep
Their vigils ceaselessly,
And far inland, throughout the shires,
On peaks are blazing bright the fires,
To warn the country-side ;
While sounds the tocsin from the towers,
When lovers fly their ladies' bowers
To arm them for the fray ;
And bells from all the churches ring,
The women and the old to bring
Within their walls to pray.
O'er breezy moor and wooded dell,
O'er lonely hill and craggy fell,
And over bridge and ford,
The hotly-spurring horsemen rode,
And messengers or ran, or strode,
To bring the thrilling news !

The halberd, pike, and arquebus
Again are furbished up for use,
And from the armouries
The sword and breastplate, red with rust,
In which their fathers put their trust,
The sons don gleefully,
And every sort of craft could float,
From battle-ship to ferry boat,
Is pressed into employ.
As erstwhile in the first Crusade,
Peter "the Hermit" England made
To ring with fiery words,
And through the island, cross in hand.
Like wildfire sped, the Holy Land
To wrest from Saladin—
So now, but in a juster cause,
The people sprang to arms, their laws
And freedom to maintain,
And never yet was heard appeal
To battle for the country's weal,
Response more willing met.
Thus when afar was flashed in flame
The signal that the Spaniards came
The country to invade,
As through the land the message ran,
The yeoman, hind, and gentleman
All stood in readiness !

V.

And now majestic, but slow,
The vast Armada, like a bow,
In crescent shape, appears,
And as the ships up Channel go,
No Spanish heart but is aglow
With proud expectancy

To Rome again to bring the foe,
And make the English people know
The spoiler's heavy hand.
Galleons of tonnage great were there,
Their pennons waving high in air,
And craft of various size,
From carracks, which in bulk surpass
All others, to the galeasse,
The smallest sailing craft,
And galleys, rowed by Moorish slaves,
While over all the standard waves
Of Spain's "Most Christian King."
Yet Drake would have his game of bowls.
With all the other gallant souls
Who led the English fleet,
And said to Howard, "Wait a while,
The time is distant ere our isle
Shall feel the Spanish yoke."
Such was the scene, on Plymouth Hoe,
By England witnessed long ago
That pleasant summer morn,
And when to war was changed the game
The players still remained the same
And equal skill displayed.

VI.

'Tis mine to chant the wondrous tale,
Which tells that not a Spanish sail
Returned to port again
Till English hands and stormy seas,
From Land's End to the Hebrides.
Extorted heavy toll.
To Howard thanks are chiefly due,
For when Elizabeth withdrew
A portion of her fleet,

This patriot seaman, well aware
How urgent was the need, a share
Of the expense incurred,
And kept afloat in readiness
Sufficient ships, when came the stress
Of war, to win the day.*
His second in command, but first
In skill, was Drake, who, all athirst
The enemy to meet.
In the *Revenge* embarked for sea,
While Hawkins in the *Victory*
His flag aloft displayed,
And Frobisher's the *Triumph* flew,
Which in her tonnage, guns and crew,
All other ships surpassed.
One sail they sank ere fall of night,
And Valdez struck his flag in sight
Of Plymouth Sound, and so
Up Channel they the running fight
Resumed, till, off the Isle of Wight,
The Spaniards stood at bay,
When Drake and Frobisher with four
Were close engaged, and bravely bore
Their fire till help arrived.
Our fleet was daily reinforced,
And their's as surely vessels lost
While slowly pushing on,

* Lord Charles Howard, the Lord High Admiral, inveighed to Walsingham against the false economy of starving the fleet, and wrote that "Sparing and war have no affinity together." "But," he added, "I must and will obey, and am glad there be such as are able to judge what is fitter to do than we here" (a sly hit at Ministers who presumed to dictate to him). And, in almost identical words, Lord Torrington wrote to Lord Nottingham, deprecating the attack on the superior French fleet, which landed us in defeat at Beachy Head, and added, "'Tis very possible I reason wrong, but I do assure you I can and will obey."

Until the Twenty-seventh of May,
When in the roads of Calais lay
The remnant, hoping aid
From Parma's troops, of whom the most
Had crossed the Scheldt, and taken post
In order to embark.
But Holland's Navy barred the way
That led from thence to sea, as they
Discovered all too late,
And English fireships, in the night,
Thence drove the foe in sorry plight,
And off Gravelines again
Our fleet renewed the running fight,
Till, panic-struck, in headlong flight
The Channel they re-crossed,
Still followed by their enemy ;
And what these failed to do, the sea
Effected speedily.
" Now distant far from English seas,
By battle undisturbed or breeze,"
Wrote Drake to Walsingham,*
" Sidonia, 'midst his orange trees,
And in enjoyment of his ease,
Shall oft-times wish himself."
When Philip's book, in English guise,
And called " A Pack of Spanish Lies,"
Drake published to the world,

* Drake wrote on the 11th July, 1588 :—" With the grace of God, if we live, I doubt it not but ere it be long so to handle the matter with the Duke of Sidonia as he shall wish himself at St. Mary Port among his orange trees." By a singular coincidence, as Professor Laughton has pointed out, Nelson wrote to Addington on the 12th August, 1801 :—" Should M. Buonaparte put himself in our way, I believe he would wish himself even in Corsica."

"No pinnace, boat, or bark," he wrote,
"They took or sunk, and burnt no cote
In all this land of ours."
In this veracious narrative
They slew Sir Francis, who alive
Soon proved himself to be,
And "sing'd the Royal braggart's beard"
When he on Philip's shores appeared
His visit to return.
No patriot will the meed refuse
Of glory to the English crews
For this deliverance,
Though honour most to Drake is due,
In whom the foes of England knew
Their ablest enemy.
And equally to Howard, who
Their schemes of conquest overthrew
By his sagacity.

VII.

Yet Drake for other deeds will be
In reverence held eternally,
For first was he of us
The globe to circumnavigate,
Although Magellan ere this date
The honour had achieved.
The *Pelican* or *Golden Hind*,
Which carried Drake, recalls to mind
How Queen Elizabeth
On his return a visit paid
To Deptford, where the vessel laid.
And knighted him on board,
And curious folk a chair may see
In Oxford University
Constructed from the ship.

VIII.

Eight years or so had passed away
Since Spain's defeat, when Cadiz Bay
Saw Howard sailing in,
With Admirals Raleigh and Carew
As so-called "Councillors," though few
Experience had like his,
Who forced an entrance past the forts
And fifteen ships of various sorts.
Which silenced were or burnt,
When Essex, holding joint command,
His soldiers disembarked on land.
And Cadiz sued for terms.
Next year, with both these "Councillors,"
Lord Howard sailed for the Azores.
Which met a fate the same,
And booty vast was taken here.
While twenty million ducats clear
From Cadiz he removed.
Of Grenville I have naught to say,
As Tennyson's heart-stirring lay
His death immortalised.
But some I'd note whose dearest wish,
Like Frobisher and Cavendish,
It was to reach Cathay.
And Willoughby, and all the rest.
Who sought the Passage called North-West.
Where he was first to die.
The time was England's Golden Age.
And never did our history's page
Such genius show as now
Was boasted by that gifted throng,
Who made her Court the first among
The thrones of Christendom.

IX.

With Raleigh's deeds the time's replete,
And dull this page and incomplete
 Would be without his name,
Which mighty memories conjures forth
Of enterprise and manly worth,
 And rare accomplishments !
A colonizer, soldier, wit
And courtier, much he'd seen and writ,
 And well had played each part ;
And Raleigh also sailed the sea,
And fought the Dons in company
 With Howard (as I've said)
At Cadiz, where in battle's van
Appeared this gallant gentleman,
 Who led the English fleet ;
When almost ere the fight began
The gunners from the batteries ran
 Beneath the *Warspite's* fire,
And blazed the shipping in the port.
While for invasion Raleigh taught
 That two could play the game.
A castigation so severe
Not since that memorable year
 Has Cadiz city known,
And as his Consort, Mary, said,
The name of Calais might be read
 Engraven on her heart,
So Cadiz, Philip might confess,
With equal truth and bitterness,
 Was deeply writ on his.
When Rooke to Cadiz harbour came,
And Nelson, with intent the same,
 Bombarded from afar,

Their fire but small impression made,
Though all maintained a strict blockade
From Blake to Collingwood ;
And futile was the cannonade
Each time their battle-ships were laid

Beside the granite forts.
Tobacco in Virginia State
Was Raleigh first to cultivate,
And brought it o'er the seas,
And soon at home the practice grew
The fragrant weed to smoke and chew,

Although the pedant James,
The ruler of Great Britain then,
A *brochure* wrote, his countrymen
Exhorting to abstain ;
But small effect his " Counter-blast " "
On Englishmen produced, so fast
The hold it had attained,
Until tobacco through the land
Was praised, and smoked on every hand
By men of all degree.

To Raleigh, then, our seamen owe
The pleasant drug they cherish so.
Though greater honour still
Will e'er the good Sir Walter's be
As founder of the colony

Called after England's Queen.
But Raleigh, though renowned and brave,
And loved at home, great umbrage gave

To Gondomar of Spain,
And to the Tower by James consigned.
For twelve long years was he confined

Within its gloomy walls,
And there, untried, the patriot pined,
Until the cruel James could find
A pretext for his death.

The wicked deed for aye will ring,
And ever execration bring
 Upon the Stuart Prince,
Who stooped to be that basest thing,
A foreign tool and recreant King,
 Just like the Second Charles.

X.

Oh, Blake!—who shattered Holland's might,
And forced her to concede the right,
 Exacted long ago,
That every ship which sailed the sea,
As token of supremacy,
 Our ensign should salute—
'Twas thou who taught the English race
In duty's cause all odds to face,
 And never to retreat,
And as Lord Nelson's prototype,
Till he arose thy glory ripe
 No equal found afloat.
Algiers' proud despot and the Bey
Of Tunis found to their dismay,
 When Blake sailed boldly in,
That now a naval power had risen,
Which loosed the bonds of those in prison,
 And broke the chains that bound
To every oar a galley-slave,
And fugitives their freedom gave
 Who sheltered 'neath her flag!
Malaga dared not Blake refuse
Demands he made, and Santa Cruz
 Submitted to his will,
When brilliant was the victory won,
Which may be said to stand alone
 For sheer audacity.

Though sailing in "with flowing sheet,"
He had to "tack" to take his fleet
From out the land-locked bay,*
For thus alone a safe retreat
Could Blake from out the roadstead "beat"
'Gainst winds that blew ahead.
But, lo! to aid him, interposed
The breeze that had the passage closed,
And shifting to abaft,
From foul to fair changed suddenly,
And bore his squadron out to sea
In triumph from the bay!
Save Nelson none is there beside
Who would the desperate feat have tried,
With sailing ships alone,
'Gainst cannon, adverse winds and tide.
To navigate without a guide
A deep and land-locked bay!
This episode in Blake's career
Closed fittingly, for death was near,
His period of command.
In those five brief but glorious years
Events were crowded, as appears
From records of the time,
Surpassed by none in war's romance,
For not alone he silenced France,
Then swayed by Mazarin,
But in the roads of Calais e'en
The conquering flag of Blake was seen.
And ships he carried off,

* To the uninitiated it may be explained that to make way against a headwind a sailing ship has to "beat" or "tack" alternately from starboard to port, and that a "flowing sheet" indicates a fair wind, the "sheet" being a rope fastened to the lower corners of a sail, as is the "tack" also.

Prepared (so news his spies conveyed)
Dunkirk to render needed aid,
Which Cromwell had forbidden.

XI.

But Blake's chief claim to glory lies
In making Holland recognise
Our lordship of the sea.
Off Dover, where the Admiral lay
With fifteen ships, Van Tromp one day
Sailed by defiantly
With two-and-forty sail, but yet,
Lest they should England's claim forget,
And pass without salute,
He fired a warning gun, and got
A broadside back, of which a shot
His cabin windows broke.
With passion Blake his whiskers curled
(As was his wont), and language hurled.
More racy than polite,*
Against the foreigner who dared
In his own waters thus to beard
An English admiral;
And caring not for odds o'er much,
But only how to beat the Dutch,
Who numbered three to one,
He loosed all sail and anchor weighed.
And soon the *Resolution* laid
Beside the *Brederode*.
O'ermatched, his state was nigh forlorn,
When he was joined by Admiral Bourne,
With eight fresh battle-ships,

* Blake, who was in his cabin drinking with some officers, exclaimed that he "took it very ill of Van Tromp that he should take his ship for a bawdy house, and break his windows."

And fiercely raged the doubtful fight,
Which ended only with the night,
When, baffled, Tromp retired.
This was in May, and August saw
The rival fleets engaged once more—
This time off Plymouth Sound,
When Ayscue England's squadron led,
While Ruyter was of their's the head,
Each numbering forty sail,
Which battled all that afternoon,
And later by the harvest moon,
Till Ruyter fled in haste,
Among our slain being Admiral Peck,
Who would not quit his quarter-deck,
Though wounded mortally.

XII.

Soon after this, off Leghorn's shore,
Where Bodley was the Commodore,
Our ships Van Galen's met,
And though the Dutchmen had eleven,
While England mustered only seven,
But one we lost, though oft
They boarded Bodley in the fray,
Who drove the enemy away
And safely entered port.
Again the Channel saw this year
De Ruyter with his fleet appear,
Of seventy sail in all,
And off the Foreland, with de Witt,
He rashly sought himself to pit
Against the mighty Blake,
By whom a great success was won.
And Ruyter, ere the day was done,
To Texel fled away,

But left behind, with Blake and Penn,
Of captured ships no less than ten,
And sunk as many more.
The English fleet was then dispersed.
As Holland, having done her worst
And failed, all fears were past,
But suddenly Van Tromp appeared,
And all the English Channel cleared,
Though Blake still barred the way,
And with but seven-and-thirty sail,
Endeavoured vainly to prevail
Against one hundred ships.
By foes surrounded there he lay,
As might a wounded stag at bay,
Attacked by half-a-score,
And well his flagship, *Triumph* named,
By her exploits the right proclaimed
That honoured name to bear.
Oft boarded by superior force,
Blake, with his seamen, had recourse
To pikes and cutlasses,
And foot to foot, and hand to hand,
Each time repulsed the desperate band
From Holland's *Brederode*.
And night but saved the *Triumph's* crew.
When Blake with his unwounded few
Escaped to fight again,
While Tromp, with broom aloft displayed,
The English Channel swept, and made
It now the Dutchman's sea !

XIII.

Yet not for long was this disgrace,
And Blake afloat soon showed his face
With eighty ships of war,

And with him Lawson sailed, and Penn,
While soldiers for the first time then
 Embarked on board the fleet,
In charge of whom were Monk and Deane,
Who had with Cromwell fighting seen
 In most of his campaigns.
The van, all eagerness to fight,
Had left the centre out of sight
 To leeward and astern.
And but a score of ships had Blake,
When, shortening sail, Tromp sought to take
 His rival unawares,
Who, though by numbers overpowered,
The *Triumph's* colours never lowered,
 Though wounded dangerously,
While 'mong the slain was Captain Ball,
With *hors de combat* nearly all
 The good ship's company,
And lay the *Speaker* mastless nigh,
Though Penn his flag defiantly
 Upon a staff displayed.
But this devoted stand bore fruit
When other vessels, to recruit
 The English line, arrived.
And Tromp at length was driven off,
Of fighting having had enough,
 And left six ships behind,
And though the action he renewed,
But futile were the efforts used
 Disaster to avert,
And Holland lost five men-of-war,
And of her convoy many more,
 With fifteen hundred slain.

XIV.

When Blake was absent in the North,
Tromp, rating high his martial worth,

The Channel sailed across,
But Monk, with Lawson in the van,
And Penn, that skilful veteran.

Near Yarmouth met the Dutch,
When Lawson cut their line in twain.
Which Tromp essayed, although in vain.

With Ruyter, to reform.
And ere the night two craft were sunk,
Though Deane was killed beside of Monk.

Who, with great *nonchalance*,
Amid the deadly fire and smoke,
From off his shoulders took his cloak,

To hide the mangled form.
Now Blake with eighteen sail arrived,
When Tromp, of every hope deprived
Of snatching victory,

Made sail, and left behind a score
Of burnt and captured ships, with o'er

Twelve hundred prisoners.
This was in June, but in July—
Determining his luck to try

While Blake remained ashore.
His health recruiting from a wound,
Which kept him long on English ground—

Tromp promptly put to sea,
And with de Witt and Evertzen
(And Holland ne'er had better men)

Again encountered Monk,
Who of the centre held command,
With Penn and Lawson either hand,
His Admirals, Vice and Rear.

With fury raged the fight till late,
The combatants inspired with hate
And resolute to win,
But in the midst was spread the news
That Tromp was slain, when all the crews,
With panic struck, refused
To fire another cannon shot,
But fled from the accursed spot.
Ensanguined with his gore.
The bloodiest battle of the sea,
Recorded in our history,
The English fleet had won,
For neither party quarter gave,
And burdened was the Channel's wave
With corpses of the slain.
Of our commanders, seven had died,
And disappeared beneath the tide
Three line-of-battle ships.
While mourned the enemy, they say,
Five thousand killed, or drowned, that day.
Besides the wounded men,
And six-and-twenty sail were burnt,
Destroyed or sunk, and Holland learnt
Resistance was in vain,
And, humbled to the very dust,
Was given to understand she must
Salute the English flag,
A custom known from days of yore,
Which, to enforce, had caused the war
Between the Dutch and us.

XV.

Among the ships with Blake renowned
Were two, whose names recall the sound
Of Nile and Tràfalgàr—



The *Vanguard* and the *Victory* these,
Which bore the flag upon the seas
Of England's favourite son—
And oft in battle, under Blake,
With lordship of the sea the stake,
They both were foremost found,
And with the *Triumph* showed the way,
(Whose namesake witnessed Duncan's day
At Camperdown), when Blake
The *Brederode*, with Tromp on board,
Repulsed, and thrice at point of sword
Her boarders drove away.
This happened off the Goodwin Sands,
And not less valiantly all hands
Behaved when, under Monk,
As far as eye could see the flood
Was strewed with sinking ships, but stood
The *Triumph* like a rock,
And, though on fire, endured the brunt
Of Tromp's attack, and still in front
Was found at close of day,
And twice the *Triumph's* captains, Ball
And Hannan named, were seen to fall
Where thickest raged the fight.

XVI.

In battle Blake thus passed his days,
And when he died the victor's bays,
Fresh-plucked, bedecked his brow,
And he in harness breathed his last,
Just as his ship her anchor cast
In port from Teneriffe.
Like Nelson, Blake a lesson gave
To those he led all ills to brave
In duty's cause, and would

With politics have naught to say,
But wrote "sufficient for the day,
As far as him concerned,
And all the fleet, it was the foes
Of England stoutly to oppose
Wherever they were met."
Like a colossus Blake bestrode
The Straits, and in the Channel rode
Triumphant as the storm ;
But yet the Royalists his bones
Disturbed from 'neath the Abbey stones,
And cast them to the winds—
Ungrateful wretches ! thus to heap
Dishonour on the dead who sleep
Within those sacred walls,
Though on the rifler who despoils
A patriot's tomb, the shame recoils
He basely would inflict !
To Nelson second only he,
If second e'en to him he be,
No seaman Blake excelled,
Who our supremacy maintained.
And for the name of England gained
Respect in every Court.

XVII.

A *faineant* King now held the reins,
To pleasure given and money gains,
But holding honour cheap,
While by the Duke of York command
Was held afloat, who, bred on land,
Was ignorant of war.
Our Navy thus became effete,
And much inferior to the fleet
That Blake so well had trained.

Though there remained among our tars
The spirit that in former wars
Had brought them victory,
As well was shown in battle soon
Off Lowestoft* on the third of June,
When England was surprised.
The Royal Duke was Admiral,
With Rupert by his side, and all
That gallant sailor band—
Penn, Ayscue, Jordan, Montagu,
And Berkeley, Myngs, and Harman—who
Were captains under Blake.
Now Lawson in the *Royal Oak*
Led England's line, and Holland's broke
Where Tromp the younger stood,
While Penn lay Opdam's ship beside,
Which, blowing up, bestrewed the tide
With corpses of the slain :
And when their line was cut in two,
Young Tromp his beaten ships withdrew.
And for the Texel steered.
Though four-and-twenty had he lost,
And this defeat his country cost
Above eight thousand men.
In flight the remnant safety sought.
And gained next day a friendly port
Without pursuit, although
Had Blake been there, 'tis safe to say
One-half their fleet had been his prey
Ere night concealed their course.
Fell many a one of high degree,
As Marlborough's Earl, who valiantly
Had led the *Royal James*,

* The battle of Lowestoft took place on the 3rd June, 1665, the 12th anniversary of Monk's victory off Yarmouth.

With Admiral Samson, and than he
One greater still, who mortally
Was wounded in the fray ;
For though were Ayscue there and Penn,
More skilled was Lawson than these men
(So Clarendon declared),
And greater trust the nation placed
In him than all, as one who'd faced
The Dutch in every war.

XVIII.

Prince Rupert—erst the Cavalier,
Who never knew a qualm of fear
When heading Charles's horse—
Commanded now the squadron rear.
While Albemarle (Monk's name as peer)
Led on the English van,
And soon the warriors, long arrayed
In rival camps, together made
The Dutch their prowess own.
When cruising off the Goodwin Sands,
Prince Rupert sailed, with Monk's commands.
To watch the Gallic fleet,
And thus, with twenty ships detached.
Monk found his squadron overmatched
By Ruyter's stronger force :
But yet for days the conflict raged,
And prodigies our men engaged
Against the foe performed,
And when by Rupert reinforced,
Still battled on, though all was lost,
With desperate heroism.
First Berkeley, Admiral of the White.
Was slain quite early in the fight,
And Harman shed his blood :

And Myngs, Vice-Admiral of the Blue,
The Dutch on board his flagship slew,
And many others fell
Of scarcely less exalted rank,
And was not one from fighting shrank,
Down to the cabin-boy !
When Myngs and Berkeley came to die,
Although they knew defeat was nigh
(A thing unknown before).
Yet they displayed a spirit high
As when, 'neath Blake's inspiring eye.
They only fought to win,
And boarded either side by foes,
Refused all quarter e'en from those
Who'd gained the quarter-deck.
And swore to none they'd give command
To lower the flag, but, sword in hand,
Died fighting gloriously !
Ten battle-ships were lost, and fell
Six hundred men, while bled as well
Just twice as many more,
But said the Minister, De Witt,
In his dispatches, homeward writ
On board De Ruyter's ship :
" That British seamen naught dismayed.
And none but they would have essayed
A task beyond their strength,
And worthy honour was defeat,
E'en more than victory, when the fleet
Such stubborn valour showed."
And Ruyter's ships were not intact,
But Hulst and Evertzen they lacked.
Two famous admirals,
And many mariners of note,
Whose place in Holland's line afloat.
Would know them never more !

XIX.

Now Monk and Rupert took no rest
Till Tromp and Ruyter had confessed
Our Navy's excellence,
And with their beaten fleet were fain
From the North Foreland back again
To Holland to retreat,
And left a score of ships behind.
While we the *Resolution* find
Was England's only loss.
All Holland was with mourning filled,
At news that wounded were, or killed.
Above seven thousand men,
And Houtwijn, Conders, and De Vries,
Their flags upon their native seas
Rehoisted not again.
But Charles of pleasure only thought,
And lavished money on his Court.
But starved the fleet, and so
De Ruyter up the Medway sailed,
Attacked Sheerness, and only failed
To make his cannon heard
Off London Bridge, when stayed by one,
Sir Edward Spragge, who honour wrung
From England's deep disgrace.
And threw himself into the breach.
Defeating Ruyter in the Reach
Beside Fort Tilbury.

XX.

No fiercer fight than was in May
With Ruyter waged in Southwold Bay.
Our naval records show.
It happ'd to be "Oak Apple Day."
And said His Royal Highness they
Must keep high festival,

And half the crews, or nearly so,
Permission had received to go
Ashore that afternoon,
When suddenly the Dutch appeared,
And as their fleet the anchorage neared,
Our men the cables cut,
For was not time enough to weigh,
Or even to make sufficient stay
Their comrades to embark.
But still the Dutchmen had enough,
And in the end were beaten off,
Though not before expired
The Captains of the *Prince* and *Anne*,
And many a gallant gentleman
With o'er two thousand men !
The Duke of York had been surprised,
Indeed, it cannot be disguised
The day at best was drawn,
And his Vice-Admiral, Sandwich, died—
One noted for his valour tried
While serving under Blake.
When he was known as Montagu,—
Who proved unto his record true,
And bettered his renown.
As might a forest denizen,
Despairing, turn upon the men
Who swarm around to slay,
So Sandwich, scorning thence to fly,
Or strike to any enemy,
Fought bravely to the death !
All efforts to subdue the fire
On board his flagship failed, and higher
The conflagration spread,
Until the sails were wrapped in flame,
And she to swift destruction came
When caught the magazine,

And of one thousand men, her crew,
Six hundred fell, and saved were few
From death by sea or fire.

XXI.

Of Spragge a thrilling tale is told,
A seaman he as skilled and bold
As any of his time,
Who in these actions glory won,
And fell when battling with the son
Of Blake's old enemy.
No fiercer fight before or since
Was known than that the *Royal Prince*
Waged with the *Golden Lion*,
And when his guns dismounted lay
And ceased the upper tier to play,
And o'er four hundred men
With all the *Prince's* masts lay prone.
Spragge shifted to another one
His flag as admiral,
And Tromp, as shattered, did the same,
And so the pair the desperate game
Renewed till Spragge once more
Betook himself on board his barge
Of yet a third to take the charge,
But by a shot was slain.

XXII.

A pæan for our tars I'd raise,
And strike the lyre in hearty praise
Of valour such as theirs
In those now long-forgotten days,
When wrote de Witt in great amaze
At their devotedness.

Omitting Blake and Monk, who stand
Apart in that heroic band,

Comes Ayscue 'mong the first,
Who Ruyter beat off Plymouth Sound,
But under Monk the Dutchmen found
Too much for him that day

Our Navy met disaster near
The Goodwin Sands, when, being in rear,
They made him prisoner.

Then Myngs and Berkeley should we note,
Who fell in battle's 'midst afloat,

Both veterans in war,
Though young in years, like all the rest,
Among whom Penn was reckoned best,

Who led the *Royal Charles*
Off Lowestoft, and Jamaica took,
An island England ne'er forsook

In all her later wars.
And Holmes, and Smith, and Allen, good
At need, who off the Foreland stood

De Ruyter's fierce attack,
With Harman, wounded oft, we find,
Who France and Holland met combined,

And worsted off St. Kitt's ;
And Kempthorne, killed when Allen went,
Accompanied by the Dutchman, Ghent,

Algiers to bring to terms,
Who perished by a musket ball,
As in the Greenwich Painted Hall

The limner's art depicts ;
And Samson, who, with Marlborough's Earl,
His flag was foremost to unfurl

At Lowestoft, where they fell,
Like Lawson, far the skilfullest,
As officers and men confessed,

Of all our Admirals.

Then Bodley, who Van Galen met,
And Bourne, with Blake once close beset,
 And Stayner, should be named ;
With Captains Jordan, Mann, and Ball,
Who died beside of Blake, I'd call
 To mind in this review—
Who made the *Triumph, Victory,*
And *Vanguard* great as any three
 Of England's battle-ships—
And Haddock, of the *Royal James,*
Who stood by Sandwich when the flames
 The great three-decker burnt ;
And Digby, Holles, Fox, and Pearce,
Who fell, with Hannan, in that fierce
 Encounter off Solebay.
Each one a glorious deed recalls,
And some within the Abbey walls
 Have mouldered into dust ;
While others 'neath the ocean rest,
Though all remain for ever blest
 Among our country's dead !

CANTO II.

BATTLES of Bantry Bay, Beachy Head, and Cape la Hogue—Rooke's Capture of Gibraltar and Engagement off Malaga—Services of Shovel, Leake, Jennings, and Dilkes—Death of Benbow—Byng's Victory off Cape Passaro—Vernon at Portobello—Career of Anson—Hawke's Victories off Cape Finisterre and Belleisle—Boscawen's Defeat of De la Clue—Actions between the *Lion* and *Elizabeth*, *Buckingham* and *Florissant*, *Monmouth* and *Foudroyant*—Watson in India and Saunders at Quebec—Warren and Knowles—Pocock's Actions with Count d'Aché and his Capture of Havannah—Faulknor, of the *Bellona*, takes the *Courageux*—Capture of Thurot's Squadron—The American War of Independence—Keppel and Byron—Reliefs of Gibraltar by Rodney, Darby, and Howe—Rodney's Victory over Count de Grasse on April 12th, 1782—Hyde Parker's Action with the Dutch—Hughes and De Suffren in the East Indies.

I.

WITH William seated on the throne
The country warred with France alone.
While peace with Holland reigned.
And from the fight in Bantry Bay,
By Herbert gained, until the day
When mighty Nelson fell,
Our fleet found respite brief from war.
And every admiral victory saw
Inscribed upon his flag.
Again a squadron Herbert led,
And held at bay off Beachy Head*
A far superior force,

* At Beachy Head (fought on June 30th, 1690, the day before the Boyne) the English and Dutch fleets, under Lord Torrington (Herbert), numbered fifty-six ships, and that of France, under Tourville, seventy. Acting under orders and contrary to his own judgment, Torrington

Though King and people blamed him much
For placing in the van the Dutch.

Who suffered heavily,
And William banished him from Court,
And had him to court-martial brought,

And sent him to the Tower.
His faulty tactics clamour raised,
Though Colomb has awarded praise.

And Mahon criticised,
Macaulay following suit in this,
Who thought that Herbert went amiss

And failed at Beachy Head.
But Russell fully paid old scores.
And, as in all our future wars.

Chained victory to his car.

II.

The first success o'er France since Sluys
That could be claimed by British crews

Was won off Cape la Hogue,
Where Russell to his bearings brought
De Tourville's Count, and nigh to port

His ship in triumph bore,
Which had been peppered so with shot
That scarce a spar remained, or spot.

Untouched by Russell's fire.

engaged the enemy, and, after suffering heavy loss, retired to the estuary of the Thames. He says: "Had I fought otherwise our fleet would have been lost and the kingdom have lain open to an invasion. As it was, most men were in fear the French would invade: but I was always of another opinion, for I always said that whilst we had a fleet in being they would not dare to make the attempt." Though victorious, the French King made no attempt to invade England, as his hands were full with a Continental war, and our victory at la Hogue two years later restored to us the command of the sea.

We may not on the battle dwell,
And show how Admiral Carter fell
 And Cloudesley Shovel fought,
And Rooke, who 'mongst the seamen there
Of fighting had the lion's share,
 As ever was his wont,
And Ashby, Admiral of the Blue,
And Delaval, his flag who flew
 As second in command.
When Tourville fled the following day,
And moored his squadron up the bay,
 Rooke followed in pursuit
With every pinnace, boat, and barge,
Of which the Admiral gave him charge,
 And many ships destroyed,
While Russell sixteen gained in all,
Including three which Delaval
 Had burnt the day before.
La Hogue thus fully testified
That Gallic seamen our's beside
 Bore no comparison,
And as for Rooke, he'll ever hold
The pride of place whene'er is told
 The story of the fight.

III.

But Rooke still greater glory won,
When wresting from the garrison
 Gibraltar's maiden fort,
On which he rained a cannonade
So deadly that the soldiers made
 All haste to quit the works.
When fifteen thousand shot and shell,
With bombs and carcasses as well,
 The British fleet had fired,

Some seamen landed on the Mole,
And soon were masters of the whole
Of Calpe's frowning rock—
And thus our tars Gibraltar won.
And be the glory their's alone,
Resulting from the deed ;
And chiefly to the captains three
Who led them on to victory—
Hicks, Jumper, Whitaker—
Whose homely Anglo-Saxon names
On Englishmen have special claims,
And ne'er should be forgot.
Against "the Rock" the world in arms
Has oft been leagued in war's alarms.
Yet e'er triumphantly
Has "Gib" repulsed its banded foes.
As back it flings the sea which flows
Beneath its granite walls !

IV.

When Rooke to capture Cadiz failed.
For Vigo Bay the Admiral sailed
His laurels to retrieve,
And all the batteries attacked,
The fleet destroyed, and Vigo sacked.
And eighteen rich galleons,
With o'er ten million dollars stored,
Our seamen made their way on board
And gave them to the flames.
A fortnight from Gibraltar's fall,
Disaster overtook the Gaul
Close off Malaga's shore,
Where Rooke engaged the Count Toulouse.
And stubbornly the rival crews
Strove victory to win ;

And though *Le Fier*, three-decker, Rooke
With other four destroyed or took,

And sought to fight again,
Yet Louis a *Te Deum* sang
Within Notre Dame, and Paris rang
With praises of the Count !

Our casualties were heavier far
Than those we mourned at Trâfalgâr,

And brave Sir Andrew Leake,
The *Grafton's* captain, met his fate,—
Whose valour to exaggerate

'Twould scarce be possible—
Who ere he yielded up his breath,
Conjured his men to fight till death

For Queen and country's sake.
A like devotion, and an end
As glorious, overtook his friend,

When cruising off the coast,—
The *Plymouth's* captain, Killigrew—
Who with five frigates captured two

Of France's battle-ships.
And though the Commodore they slew,
Of his success the hero knew
Before his spirit fled.

V.

When Admiral Rooke had passed away,
His second on Malaga's day

(Sir Cloudesley Shovel now)
Assumed afloat the chief command,
And Peterborough helped on land

When Barcelona fell,
And greatly aided Prince Eugene,
When seamen from the fleet were seen
The allied troops beside

Upon the march and on the Var,
Which by his fire the British tar
Enabled them to pass,
Before Toulon he rendered aid,
His fleet against the batteries laid,
And cannon disembarked,
And burnt the docks and arsenal,
With many ships, and breached the wall,
Although 'twas all in vain,
And from Toulon Eugene fell back.
When Shovel followed in his track
And covered the retreat.
Not long this failure he survived,
But on the deck where he had lived
Sir Cloudesley met his end;
And where, indeed, a worthier grave
Than 'neath the Channel's stormy wave
Could seaman hope to find?
Although our Navy, when bereft
Of Rooke and Shovel, none had left
Their equals in renown,
Yet men like Jennings, Dilkes, and Leake
(Sir John I mean) remained to speak
With foemen in the gate,
And Norris was a seaman true,
And Byng (Lord Torrington) had few
Surpassing him afloat.
When Leake in Europe's central sea
Was in command, the enemy
He twice dispersed at "Gib,"
And forced the *Magnanime* ashore
(De Pointis' ship) with other four,
Which he destroyed or burnt;
And captured Alicant, and steered
His seaward course until he neared
The Balearic Isles,

Of which Majorca soon was won,
And then Minorca, later on,
 With General Stanhope's aid.*
Next Barcelona Leake relieved,
And when at lowest ebb retrieved
 The fortunes of the King,
Who struggled for the mastery
With Philip, France's nominee,
 Though ended all this strife,
In Charles, our candidate in Spain.
The throne resigning so's to gain
 The crown of Germany.
Though Dilkes the French off Lisbon beat,
And Carthagera Jennings' fleet
 Brought under Charles's rule,
French privateers and ships-of-war
The Channel swept, as ne'er before.
 Of English merchantmen,
When Forbin led and Count St. Paul,
And Bart, the most renowned of all,
 And one Duguay-Trouin,
Who, having with a dozen sail
Encountered five, which scorned his hail
 To strike, engaged them close,
And capturing three, the *Devonshire*.
Of eighty guns, he set on fire,
 Which blew up suddenly,
When of the great two-decker's crew.
Seven hundred men in all, but two
 Survived to tell the tale!
The fifth her course to Ireland shaped,
And was the only one escaped
 Of Edward's little fleet,

* Admiral Byng lost Minorca in 1756, though we recovered it at the peace six years later, in exchange for Belleisle, but finally surrendered the island in 1783.

Though Dursley had revenge in full,
And riddled so Duguay's ship's hull
 He scarce could get away,
And left behind the frigate *Gloire*,
While one we'd lost the day before,
 The *Bristol*, was regained.
War's Goddess, that most fickle dame
(Bellona was her classic name),
 Helped Tollet beat him off ;
But favoured she Duguay once more,
When he the *Gloucester*, Sixty-four,
 By greater force o'ercame,
A loss, like all the others, due
To sending ships in numbers few
 Our traders to escort.
Jean Bart attained as great renown,
And though he hailed from Dunkirk town.
 Was English by descent ;
And Count St. Paul was nigh as brave.
Who found at sea a sailor's grave
 When by a bullet slain,
Whose death King Louis mourned and said.
"That rather than St. Paul were dead,
 He'd lose the prizes won."

VI.

Now Benbow comes, that grand sea-dog.
The sea his home, his cruiser's log
 The only book he scanned ;
Of whom are told some stories quaint.
If not apocryphal, which paint
 A typical old salt,
A character like Trunnion,
Both rough and ready, ever one
 To King and Country true.

He died of wounds received in fight
 (In which he found his sole delight)
 In the West India Isles ;
 Where two whole days and all one night,
 He battled bravely, scorning flight,
 Against Du Casse's fleet,
 And though his craven captains lacked
 The courage to assist, attacked
 With only two to help.

VII.

The skilful Byng, or Torrington*
 (More happy than his luckless son),
 Off the Sicilian Coast
 The Spanish squadron chanced to meet,
 And soundly Castaneta beat,
 Who perished of his wounds.
 The *Grafton's* captain, Haddock, led,
 And, distancing the others, sped
 Like greyhound from the leash,
 And many rearmost ships o'ertook,
 Which, having crippled, he forsook
 For others in the van,
 And left the task to those astern
 Of each securing in its turn,
 While he pushed on ahead.
 The action off Passaro o'er,
 Our Admiral sent a Commodore
 To hunt up damaged ships,
 And Walton (such the seaman's name,
 Which should be handed down to fame)
 Right well performed his trust ;

* Sir George Byng was created Viscount Torrington (a title borne by Admiral Herbert) for his victory over the Spanish fleet off Cape Passaro, in Sicily, on the 11th August, 1718.

For though laconic with his pen,
A man he was above all men
His orders to obey,
And wrote, "I've burnt and taken all
The Spanish vessels, great and small,
Per margin in the list." *
"Per margin" was most business-like.
And more the words of ledgers strike
The ear than battle-ships.
And yet the case is apposite
To such as long despatches write,
Who ought to follow suit,
And brief and pithy notes indite,
Affording details of a fight.
As Walton did to Byng,
For some long-winded yarns I've read,
And thought 'twere well had less been said
Of England's little wars.

VIII.

To Vernon Portobello town
And castle hauled its colours down,
After a brief defence ;
An exploit blazoned much abroad,
And Vernon and the fort his sword
Had captured were renowned,
And public-houses bore each name,
While sponsors both of them became
To streets in every town.

* Walton's letter, which has been almost literally transcribed, ran thus : " We have taken and destroyed all the Spanish ships and vessels which were upon the coast, the number as per margin." These were four destroyed, four burnt, carrying an aggregate of 282 guns, besides four bomb-vessels.

Much Vernon blustered ere he sailed,
 But then at Carthage failed,
 And Cuba later on,
 Though Wentworth also was to blame.
 And on the pair dishonour came,
 Which England also shared !
 With Vernon Lord John Manners fell,
 Whose fate the marble records tell
 Upon the Abbey's walls,
 Wherein is shown with simple truth
 How fought and died the gallant youth.
 Sprung from a ducal line.

IX.

As navigator, Anson's claims
 But few excel of those whose names
 Are handed down to us,
 And famed is the *Centurion*,
 Which with the *Wager* sloop was one
 Of six from Portsmouth sailed,
 Intent upon discovery
 In that far distant Southern Sea
 Which none since Drake had sailed.
 Who but the tale of shipwreck knows.
 By Byron fully told, when rose
 The crew in mutiny
 Against the *Wager's* Captain, Cheape.
 With whom the dangers of the deep
 Young Byron overcame,
 And journeying far and wide for five
 Long years, survived his "Narrative"
 To place before the world !
 No need to tell the dogged pluck
 Which Anson showed 'gainst adverse luck,
 Nor how the great galleon

He took, from Acapulco bound,
With thrice his crew, all fresh and sound,
While the *Centurion's* men
With sickness were enfeebled found,
As they had set no foot on ground
Since leaving the Ladrones.
For many weeks they'd cruised about
The Philippines, and in and out
The isles, the ship's return
Awaiting from the distant shore,
With silver filled and gold galore
From mines in Potosi,
To barter for the silks and spice,
And past the dreams of avarice
The treasure was she bore.
The Spaniards, led by Montero—
Who had five hundred men or so
To meet the English two,
Of whom the greater part were ill—
Deficient were in gunnery skill,
And struck to Anson's fire,
Whose total loss was thirty-three.
About one half the enemy
Sustained in killed alone.

X.

Oft Anson led the French a dance,
And fought the Spaniards *à outrance*
In both the hemispheres.
The first he beat off Finisterre,
When led by Admiral Jonquière,
And half-a-dozen ships
He took that day in Forty-seven,
A year more celebrated even
By Hawke's great victory,

Won also near this Spanish Cape,
When sought l'Etendeur to escape,
 Though vainly, his attack.
"They took a deal of drubbing," said
The Admiral to the King, who read,
 But failed to comprehend
The drift of the despatch aright,
And asked Lord Chesterfield some light
 To throw upon the phrase ;
On which the Earl to Bedford turned,
And asked the Duke what he had learned
 " A drubbing " signified,
As one who'd cause the act to rue,
For at Newmarket black and blue
 He'd recently been thrashed.
The meaning to His Majesty
Becoming known, the King with glee
 Laughed long and boisterously.
Hard pressed was Hawke that day when nigh
Came Harland in the *Tilbury*
 And saved the *Devonshire* ;
When from the scene the *Tonnant* fled
(l'Etendeur's ship), and safely sped,
 With *l'Intrepide*, to port,
But all the others captured were,
And thus the fight off Finisterre
 Went well for England's cause.
Two captains, who then service saw,
A reputation high in war
 Were destined to achieve—
These, Saunders named and Rodney, won
A fame undying ere was done
 That memorable day :
While Saumarez, like them with love
Of glory filled, his utmost strove
 The victory's fruit to reap,

And chased the *Tonnant* to a stand,
With one of them on either hand
Approaching rapidly,
When to his boldness, sad to say,
The youthful hero fell a prey,
Slain by a musket ball.

XI.

In 'Fifty-nine de Conflans found
Our fleet upon its cruising ground
Between Rochefort and Brest,
When, swooping on the Gallic Cock,
That gamesome bird of Yorkshire stock,
The strong and eager Hawke,
Destroyed their war-ships where they lay,
Or drove them out of Quiberon Bay
Into the open sea.
All heedless of the rising gale,
The British Admiral, making sail,
Steered straight for Conflans' ship,
Soleil Royal—alike in name,
And also in its fate the same.
With Tourville's at la Hogue—
Which drove ashore when trying to fly,
And lit with lurid flames the sky
And all the neighbouring coast.
Hawke's flag the *Royal George* had flown,
A battle-ship yet better known
From Cowper's stately verse,
As she which foundered off Spithead,
When three-and-twenty years had fled
Since Hawke's great victory,
And carried to a watery tomb
Above a thousand souls, 'mong whom
Were sweethearts, wives and friends.

But from her ashes, Phoenix-like,
A *Royal George* arose, to strike
The foreigner with dread
That day in June of 'Ninety-four,
When first was she her fire to pour
Upon the Gallic line,
With Admiral Bridport's flag aloft,
When France to Howe off Ushant doffed
The "Cap of Liberty."
Amid the reefs Hawke chased the foe,
And some he sank, and harassed so
The remnant that the crews
In panic ran their ships ashore
To save themselves from capture, or
By powder blew them up ;
And at its best appeared our fleet,
Which for the enemy they beat
A fine contempt displayed ;
While as for their commander, Hawke,
Nor stormy winds nor shoals could baulk
His stubborn English will.

XII.

The King created Hawke a lord,
An honour Anson by the sword
With equal justice won.
But times are changed, and now rewards
And titles in the House of Lords
Are bountifully showered
On those who party votes record,
Or plutocrats who can afford
To win a doubtful seat ;
For wealth supplies the golden key,
And is the *open sesame*
To place and social power.

Who now the " Garter " solely have,
Which Edward founded for the brave
Companions who beside
Him stood on Cressy's bloody field,
And France's army made to yield
Submissively to him ?
But few of those we're proud to own
Among our leaders of renown,
And save Lord Howe, at sea,
And Marlborough, Granby, Wellington,
With Anglesea and Monk, not one
The Garter have received,
But civil Peers alone attain
The honour, and their sons again,
As though of right, succeed ;
And thus this Order chivalrous
We find perverted to a use
For which 'twas not designed.

XIII.

Lords Hawke and Anson have been named,
But equally Boscawen claimed
His country's gratitude,
And of this brave triumvirate—
Each one of whom a victory great
O'er France's fleet achieved,
And made the Second George's reign
For England glorious on the main—
His fame nigh equalled their's.
Boscawen 'twas off Finisterre
The French o'erhauled, and held them there
In his tenacious grasp,
Till Anson, with a favouring wind,
Appeared upon the scene behind,
And made the victory sure.

In India long he held command,
And Pondicherry strove by land
As well as sea to win,
Though vainly, and at length was forced
To raise the siege, in which were lost
Some hundreds of our men,
And not till fifteen years had passed
Did Pondicherry fall at last
To Coote's and Stevens' arms.
Boscawen took Cape Breton Isle,
Though Louisburg held out awhile
'Gainst his and Amherst's arms ;
And in the Med'terranean Sea
Achieved a signal victory,
Which showed him at his best,
For as he lay at " Gib," la Clue
With all his fleet endeavoured through
The Straits to pass to Brest,
On which Boscawen anchor weighed,
And though it blew a gale, essayed
The foe to overtake.
His flag was on the *Namur* flown,
While at the *Ocean's* fore were shown
The colours of la Clue,
Who sought to cripple him aloft,
The better to escape, as oft
Their custom was in war.
His purpose gained, thence fled la Clue,
Nor could the *Namur* more pursue,
So to the *Newark* he
Removed, and crowding sail in chase,
The *Centaur* forced his fire to face
And soon to strike her flag.
Three other vessels, there embayed,
Ashore were driven, and where they laid
Were captured or destroyed—

The *Ocean*, and a famous pair,
Redoutable and *Téméraire*,
Which *Tràfalgàr* recall,
Where followed one in Nelson's wake.
Who for the first his course did take
When leading England's line ;
And from her top the ball was aimed
Which mortally the hero maimed.
And dimmed the victory.
This was Boscawen's last success.
And in two years, or somewhat less,
The veteran passed away,
Of whom the elder Pitt declared
That none in equal measure shared
His confidence, for he
Would never difficulties make
When asked some deed to undertake,
But cheerfully accept.

XIV.

On three engagements I'd descant.
When gallantly each combatant
The English flag upheld—
The first when fought unto the death
The *Lion* and *Elizabeth*,
A Gallic man-of-war
Prince Charles escorting to the land
Where Scottish clansmen, sword in hand,
Had raised the Stuart flag.
But stood a *Lion* in the path,
And fearful 'twas to see the wrath
The royal beast displayed,
As battling till the fight was drawn,
They both lay crippled and forlorn,
With half their seamen down.

And for our loss it reached eight score,
While the *Elizabeth's* was more

By over forty men.
Than Brett, who then the *Lion* led,
The British Navy never bred

A braver officer :
And we may also say the same
Of Tyrrell, of the *Buckingham*,

Who fought the *Florissant*,
When with their rigging closely twined,
The seamen worked the guns and lined
The sides with musketry,
And o'er two hundred French were killed.
While some three hundred wounded filled
Their decks and batteries,
Which looked like shambles, Smollett said.
'Twas so encumbered with the dead

And dying combatants !
An admiral Tyrrell rose to be,
And when at length he died, the sea
His mortal part received.

And thus although the Abbey walls
Upon his cenotaph recalls

This brilliant deed of arms,
His ashes find their last repose
Where ceaselessly the ocean flows,

Unheeding change and time.
When Gardiner, of the *Monmouth*, died
In victory's arms, on every side

Unbounded praise was his,
For in this little Sixty-four
The French *Foudroyant* Gardiner swore

To bring to an account—
As Galissonnière's flag she bore
While he was serving in the war
As captain under Byng—

And spite her size resolved to try
Minorca to avenge or die
In making the attempt.
Right nobly he redeemed his word.
And grander deed can none record
Than this of which we tell,
For though with life he paid the cost.
And o'er one hundred men were lost
Of his victorious crew,
Quite double fell on board the prize,
And more, no Frenchman could disguise
How great was their defeat ! *

XV.

When in the "Seven Years' War" engaged,
Hostilities with France we waged
On every sea and shore
In both the old World and the New,
Where Colonists and natives flew
To arms, and eagerly,
With hearts by mutual hate inspired,
Or ardent lust of conquest fired,
In deadly conflict closed.
Beneath the sunny Indian sky
Assistance Watson readily
Accorded Clive ashore
In building up the Empire vast
Which Aurungzebe's has far surpassed
In riches and extent ;
And Plassey saw field-pieces manned
By sailors serving on the land,
Who smartness showed and skill.

* The broadsides of the two ships were respectively 540 and 1,136 pounds, and their crews 470 and 900. A French Eighty-four of that day was equal in weight of metal to a British Ninety-eight, and carried as many men as our largest three-decker.

When on that famous battle-ground
Defeat Surajah Dowlah found
From England's nascent power.
With Hawke he served off Finisterre,
Where Saumarez and Rodney were
The heroes of the day,
With Saunders, who the *Neptune* won.
And other two, which sought to run.
Their colours forced to lower.
When Byng before Minorca failed,
Then Saunders for Gibraltar sailed,
With Hawke, who orders had
Our fleet before Toulon to lead.
And boastful Galissonnière read
A lesson much required.
As Watson aided Clive in need,
So Saunders was a friend indeed
To Wolfe before Quebec :
And ever have we found it so—
That victory will its halo throw
Upon our standards when
Relations cordial reign between
The leaders, martial and marine :
While, on the other hand,
Whene'er ill-will or jealousy
Their counsels sway, on land and sea
All operations fail
And great disasters supervene.
This was at Carthagen seen,
Where Vernon Wentworth failed.
And he, in turn, inspired with hate,
Determined to retaliate.
And so on Cuba's shore
His aid denied to Vernon's scheme,
And seemed apparently to deem
His country's honour naught.

Here Warren should be named, and Knowles,
Whom few among the gallant souls
Our Navy bred surpassed.
The first with Anson helped to beat
Off Finisterre la Jonquière's fleet,
And took *l'Invincible*;
And Knowles a Spanish squadron met,
Defeating them off Cuba, yet
For failing to pursue,
In which his judgment only erred,
A heavy censure he incurred
By sentence of a Court.

XVI.

In Indian seas the Navy still
A seaman of resource and skill
In Admiral Pocock found ;
Who had with Watson aided Clive
And kept in English hearts alive
The faith by Nelson held,
That singly every British tar
Was equal any three in war
Of French or Spanish blood.
From Chand'nagore the French they drove.
And all their settlements above
Calcutta made their own ;
And Pocock twice engaged d'Aché.
When indecisive was the fray,
Though long and obstinate,
For France, as ever, in the East
Her naval weakness showed the least
Of anywhere afloat.
They battled off Negapatam,
And next year in collision came.
Again without result,

When Pocock's vessels numbered nine,
Two more than when in battle's line
He met the French before,
But still the fleet of Count d'Aché,
Two hundred guns had more than they,
And o'er a thousand men.
Our flagship *Farmouth's* first attack
Was made upon the *Zodiac*,
Which bore their Admiral,
Who, ere her cannon ceased to play,
Upon the deck sore wounded lay
With his flag-captain slain;
While Michie fell upon our side,
And other two commanders died
Of wounds received that day,
And of her crew the *Tiger* o'er
Two hundred lost, and red with gore
Her decks and scuppers ran.
As for the Admiral Count d'Aché,
He steered for Pondicherry Bay
And there repaired his fleet,
And when three weeks had passed away,
Though Lally prayed of him to stay,
He left them to their fate,
And fell the fort of Karical,
Upon the Eastern coast, and all
Their other settlements.
Now Pocock sought another clime,
And Spain, not France, attacked this time
Before Havannah town,
Where Albemarle had charge ashore,
Whose brother was the commodore
And disembarked the troops—
A seaman held among the best
Of those our Navy then possessed,
Who lived to be a Peer.

Before Havannah with a will
The fleet and army fought until
The town and fort succumbed,
Successes which the measure fill
Of Albemarle's and Pocock's skill,
As of their men's renown,
Who treasure vast, as of a mine,
And battle-ships, in number nine,
As prize of war received.

XVII.

Nor should a deed unsung remain,
Where glory was the only gain
Acquired by those engaged,
Who earned a store of priceless wealth.
Though honour was the stake, not pelf.
Rewarded their success.
Well the *Bellona*, Seventy-four,
Upheld the martial name she bore.
Against the *Courageux*,
And Faulknor scored a victory
Than which the annals of the sea
Can none more brilliant show,
For Lambert hauled his colours down
And England's tars was fain to own
Superior to his.
A quaint account our Admiral gave,
Who wrote that crowds on Tagus' wave
And Lisbon's shore appeared
To see him bring his prize to port,
While cheers from People, King, and Court
The conqueror acclaimed.
Who ere the fight, 'tis said, his crew
Addressed as "Gentlemen,"—and who
A better right could show

To that abused but honoured name
Than seamen who have won the claim

That gallantry confers ?
This Faulknor was the son and sire
Of officers whose sole desire

'Twas glory to attain.
The first of the immortal three
Was captain of the *Victory*.

When, off the Casket rocks,
Disaster ship and crew befell,
And not a soul survived to tell

The story of her loss ;
While his more celebrated son,
Off Guadaloupe an action won,

Although at cost of life,
When he compelled the frigate *Pique*
For quarter from the *Blanche* to seek,
And strike the Tricolour.

XVIII.

An English captain, Elliott called,
A Gallic squadron overhauled.

With Count Thurot in charge,
Who took advantage of a gale,
Which drove our fleet away, to sail

From out of Dunkirk port,
And thence for Ireland steered Thurot,
The English power to overthrow

With troops he had embarked.
But when he neared the Isle of Man,
Upon his homeward way, he ran

Against the English ships,
And though he battled stubbornly,
'Twas all in vain, and soon the three
To Elliott's trio struck.

And Count Thurot himself was slain,
While not a man to France again
Was destined to return.
Eyre Coote, in India, broke her power,
And never from that fatal hour
Raised she her head again,
When, helped by Stevens, Cuddalore
And Pondicherry fell before
Their furious attack.
And also in the Eastern Seas
The conquest we acquired with ease
Of all the Philipppines,
When Cornish our blue-jackets led,
Whose gallant comrades, clad in red,
Had Draper in command.
But we Manilla handed o'er
When Florida's unpeopled shore
Was yielded in exchange,
And gave Havannah back to Spain,
And all the islands on the main
From France acquired, returned :
And though we kept Cape Breton Isle.
With Canada, and for Belleisle
Minorca was received,
Yet small return was this for gold
And blood and precious lives untold.
Expended in the war !

XIX.

Some fourteen years had passed when we.
Who oft had fought for liberty,
Sought others to enslave ;
But beaten by our colonies,
With half of Europe their allies,
The Sea disowned its lord.

Till Rodney rose our foes to face,
Who only for the briefest space
Britannia's rule defied.
Now Holland seized the welcome chance
Her laurels to retrieve, and France
Our colonists gave aid ;
For Louis hoped to pay old scores,
And have revenge for all the wars
When France had known defeat ;
And pined the Dons o'er everything
Gibraltar back again to win,
And free the Spanish soil.
Some indecisive actions showed
That England's fleet no longer rode
Supreme on every sea ;
For Howe could barely hold his own
With Count d'Estaing off New York town.
Then under British rule,
Till Byron's ships in sight appeared,
When back the French to Boston steered.
Pursued by Admiral Howe.
Savannah fell, and in July
The Count d'Estaing, when cruising nigh
Grenada, Byron met,
Though inconclusive was the fight,
Like Keppel's action, waged in sight
Off Ushant months before,
When fled d'Orvilliers in the night,
And at the break of morning's light
No sail in sight appeared !
Now allied squadrons, seventy strong,
The expanse of Channel swept along
In sight of Albion's cliffs, *

* Thrice within the last two centuries our Navy lost temporarily the command of the Channel—viz., 1690, after the defeat of Lord Torrington at Beachy Head, in 1744, and 1779.

As when Van Tromp, with broom on high,
No English pennant could descry
From Land's End to the Nore.
It was a time of storm and stress,
And in Gibraltar we no less

Were in extremity,
When Rodney stood, like stag at bay,
And taught the French and Spaniards they
Must reckon now with him,
And beat Langara near the "Rock,"
Where landed he of food a stock.

And stores of every kind :
And, though it blew a heavy gale,
Made prize of half-a-dozen sail,
Langara's 'mong the rest.

Again a hostile fleet around
Gibraltar closed, until the sound
Of British guns was heard,
As in the offing Darby hove
In sight, and in confusion drove
The enemy away.

A third time England's banded foes
The fort assailed, till Howe arose
And broke the long blockade,—
Though General Elliot heeded not
The storm of bombs and red-hot shot

From floating batteries,—
And passing in, relieved the fort.
And, as when Rodney succour brought.

Their vaunted fleets dispersed !
Among his captains not a few
Unstinted praise from England drew

In Europe's greatest war,
As Jervis, who St. Vincent saw,
And was of Spain the conqueror.
With Nelson aiding him :

And Duncan, great no less than he,
Whose brow the bays of victory
 Bedecked at Camperdown ;
And Parker, Alexander Hood,
And Hotham, sure a brotherhood
 Of seamen unsurpassed !

XX.

'Tis told in song how Rodney fought
When he de Grasse a lesson taught
 How best to break the line,
To whom before he'd battle given.
And also with de Guichen striven.
 Though indecisively,
And captured islands from the Dutch.
And though o'ermatched and suffering much,
 A front unbroken showed.
Next Hood, of numbers not afraid,
Off Martinique a cannonade
 Against de Grasse maintained.
And then a junction made with Graves.
Who sought our mastery of the waves.
 Though vainly, to retain ;
And so at length it came about
That York-town saw the final rout
 Of British power ashore,
Although revenge, as full as sweet.
Had Rodney on de Grasse's fleet
 For all our failures past.
The *Ville de Paris*, said to be
The finest ship that sailed the sea.
 The Gallic Admiral bore,
Whose might Cornwallis challenged first.
With love of glory all athirst
 And reckless of the odds,

Till followed Hood, the *Barfleur's* chief.
To give the *Canada* relief

From the three-decker's fire.
As might the monarch of the glen,
When close beset by hounds and men
On his pursuers turn,
Or like a wounded forest king,
Whose roar once made the welkin ring.

When in the hunter's toils—
So worthy now the Admiral proved,
As on the deck he stood unmoved.

To fly the flag of France,
Until, when most had bled on board,
De Grasse delivered up his sword

And struck to Admiral Hood.
The action o'er, at set of sun
Four battle-ships had Rodney won.

And two were burnt or sunk,
And Hood soon after captured four.
In all thus making half-a-score :

But as at *Trâfalgâr*,
So now, a storm great havoc wrought
Among the prizes sent to port
And ships convoying them,
And some upon the coast were driven,
While more, with masts and bowsprit riven.

Nigh foundered bodily,
And for the others, tempest tossed.
They were, with every sailor, lost

Upon the open sea.
Of Rodney's gains remained a pair
In safety port to reach, and share

The welcome England gave :
And though in fight three thousand died,
As many more were drowned beside
In the great hurricane.

Together with each British crew
The prizes—*Hector*, *Glorieux*,
And *Ville de Paris*—manned.
As for the *Ardent*, she alone
Of all the battle-ships we won
Our ensign bore at sea,
And her the saddest fate befell
'Tis in the power of tongue to tell,
Or hand of man indite,
Nor can imagination e'en
Depict the horrors of the scene
In colours overdrawn,
As she, unseen by human eye,
Unheard her crew's despairing cry,
Blew up with all on board !

XXI.

A sanguinary action near
The English coast was fought this year
'Tween us and Holland's fleet,
When Parker off the Dogger Bank
The enemy engaged, and sank
One ship and shattered more.
But each of fighting had enough,
And to effect repairs sheered off.
And then returned to port,
Where George a visit Parker paid.
Though all that can with truth be said.
Is that the fight was drawn.
Five times de Suffren fought with Hughes.
And neither did a battle lose,
So nearly were they matched,
While each, of skill and valour tried.
As vainly with the other vied
To show his greater worth.

And prove who had the smarter crew,
 Or ship-manceuvring better knew
 To gain the weather-gage.
 Hughes' ship, *Superb*, which suffered most
 In these repeated actions, lost
 About three hundred men,
 And twice were her commanders slain.
 While for her masts, fore, mizen, main,
 They all were shot away.
 The *Exeter* lost sixty less,
 But though a wreck and in distress,
 With Captain Reynolds killed,
 And hemmed in close on every side,
 Her Commodore with calmness cried,
 When some of yielding spoke,
 "What! strike the flag! I'd rather sink.
 Than ever with surrender link
 The name of *Exeter*!
 Yet cause had England to bewail
 The sacrifice without avail
 Of many precious lives,
 For nigh two thousand men had bled,
 And there were reckoned with the dead
 Six captains of the fleet,
 Which numbered but a dozen ships.
 Whose names familiar to our lips
 As household words arise.*
 O, matchless Navy! thus to rear
 A race to whom unknown is fear
 Of aught that sails the sea,
 And not less glorious Island thou,
 Who wears upon thy queenly brow
 The Ocean's diadem!

* Among Hughes's ships were the *Sultan*, *Hero*, *Monmouth*, *Eagle*, *Worcester*, *Defence*, *Inflexible*, and *Isis*, most of which are still to be found on the Navy List.

CANTO III.



THE Revolutionary War—Our Naval Heroes—Howe's Victory of
"The Glorious First of June," 1794—The *Brunswick* and *Vengeur*
—Bridport's Action—Loss and Recapture of the *Alexander*—
Hood at Toulon—Hotham's Action—Duncan's Victory at
Camperdown—Jervis's Defeat of the Spanish Fleet off Cape St.
Vincent—Sir Sydney Smith at Acre—Repulse of Saumarez at
Algeciras and his subsequent Success—Calder's Action—
Strachan's Victory—Duckworth off San Domingo and in the
Dardanelles—Reverses at Mauritius—The Actions off Tama-
tave and Lissa —The British Seaman of Old : a Sketch.

I.

THE British Navy never yet
A line of seamen to beget
Has failed in time of need,
But now past glories were obscured,
And ne'er before had France endured
Defeats like those in store,
Whose brightness (as a planet's ray
Is seen when night succeeds to day)
Increased in brilliancy,
Till culminated victory's star
In matchless Nile and Trâfalgar,
When naught remained to win !
Ere closed that sanguinary war,
The Naval Powers of Europe saw
Their squadrons overpowered,
Until, as in the days of Blake,
They followed meekly in the wake
Of ours with stricken flag ;

And was not known a foreign clime
But witnessed, some or other time,
The pluck of British tars,
Nor was there any hostile shore
But echoed with the cannon's roar
From England's wooden walls !
First Howe o'ercame our ancient foe,
As just a hundred years ago
Had Russell at La Hogue ;
And Duncan shattered at a blow
The Dutchman's fleet and made him know
A second Blake had risen ;
While Jervis taught the tars of Spain
A Drake had come to life again
Upon St. Vincent's Day ;
And mighty Nelson, ere he died,
To Denmark's Navy testified
His genius sublime.
And when at Trâfalgâr he fell,
Did all the doughtiest deeds excel
Of those who'd gone before,
No nation but in turn could tell
The enchantment of the Wizard's spell,
Which each had overcome ;
And battles won by him surpassed
All those by others gained, and cast
E'en Blake's into the shade,
Till no Marine he left unquelled,
And even invasion's fears dispelled
In the most timid breast !
The shades of mariners of yore
(Now wandering on the Stygian shore
Recounting glories past),
Might well have heard with doubting smile
Of Nelson's victory at the Nile
From Hades' new recruits,

When shattered lay each hostile sail,
While loudly rose the Gallic wail
For all the thousands slain !
Not only did the hero beat
The allied Franco-Spanish fleet,
But taught the Northern Powers
That forts and floating batteries
Regarded he no more than flies,
But brushed them from his path ;
And died when naught was left to gain,
And rode our Navy on the main
Unchallenged and supreme !
Assuredly beneath the sun
Such triumphs never seamen won
As England's mariners ;
And ne'er with truth could it be said,
Though 'gainst them Europe was arrayed,
They shrank from any odds !

II.

To Howe with hope the country turned,
Though soon the King and people learned
All doubtings to dispel ;
And trusted both the brothers Hood,
Than whom no better Admirals could
In any fleet be found ;
With Graves and bold Cornwallis, who
With Rodney fought in Eighty-two ;
And greater still than they,
The vanquisher of Camperdown,
Who had at "Gib" his pennant flown
With Rodney and with Howe ;
And Jervis, whom the Spaniards knew,
And his acquaintance to renew
Were destined, though unasked ;

With others, who, in former wars
And now again, the foe gave cause
Their names to recollect.
Now many naval veterans,
Forgotten in the peace, their plans
For dealing with the French
Before the Admiralty laid,
And both the Press and country mad
To ring with their designs
For burning port and arsenal.
And all the squadrons of the Gaul
Destroying where they lay.
The same fertility prevailed
When Russia we, with France, assailed
Some forty years ago ;
And schemes as certain of success
Propounded were with eagerness
To raze Sebastopol,
And some, like Lord Dundonald, showed
Conclusively (or so they vowed)
On paper, how to bring
Czar Nicholas upon his knees,
By blowing up, with perfect ease,
His ships and batteries.

III.

"The Glorious First of June" I sing,
A day will e'er proud memories bring
To all of British blood,
As 'twas the earliest victory
By us achieved on land or sea
Against the ancient foe.
When on the twenty-eighth of May
In partial action Howe and they
Were distantly engaged.*

*The battle of the "Glorious First of June," 1794, took place 250 miles off Ushant, a distance further from land than any great naval action.

The Admiral, though a veteran,
Whose life had reached the Psalmist's span,
 Was eager for the fight
As any youthful midshipman
Who up the rigging nimbly ran
 When told to "clear the vane."
The breeze was fresh and weather fair
When first the *Revolutionaire*,
 The rearmost Gallic ship,
Our own *Bellerophon* o'erhauled,
Which so the great three-decker mauled,
 With others aiding her,
That she was brought to sorry plight,
And, under cover of the night,
 Was taken thence in tow,
And thus escaped by this mischance,
And reached a neighbouring port of France
 When she was fairly won.
Next day the *Royal George* and *Queen*
In battle's van were foremost seen,
 With Hood's and Gardner's flags,
And Howe bore down upon the rear,
When shattered lay the latter near
 The fast approaching foe,
Till they their damages repaired,
When, crowding sail, the trio shared
 With others in the chase.
Four crippled ships the following day
The French to harbour sent away ;
 But by the first of June,
As many others, fresh from port,
By Admiral Nielly had been brought
 To reinforce their line.
When dawned that fateful morning's light,
The French in line appeared in sight
 Upon the starboard tack,

When Howe for Joyeuse steered his course,
 Who in the *Montagne* led the force
 Opposed to him that day,
 And poured into the flagship's stern
 A broadside made this tyro learn
 The way a battle's won.
 As thus he brought his guns to bear,
 The *Jacobi* received a share
 Of the *Queen Charlotte's* fire,
 Till both had forged ahead, when Howe
 Engaged the *Juste* upon his bow,
 Which, veering smartly round
 Beneath our flagship's counter, raked
 Her fore and aft, and then escaped
 The *Montagne* to rejoin.
 Meanwhile, each ship from out the ruck
 A foe engaged until she struck
 Or left the line, and so,
 Quite overcome, they put about,
 And, setting sail, in headlong rout
 For Brest pursued their course.

IV.

The *Royal George* the *Glory* backed,
 And both the *Sanspareil* attacked,
 Which lowered the Tricolour,
 Although she lay a wreck ere this.
 And o'er three hundred men, I wis,
 Were slain or bled on board ;
 And never will our Navy fail
 A battleship named *Sanspareil*
 To bear upon the List.
 The French *Northumberland* a prize
 To Howe became, which by surprise
 Had formerly been lost,

When to a trio, each of strength
That equalled hers, she struck, at length,
After a stubborn fight ;
And Watson died of wounds on board,
Than whom no braver man a sword
In England's Navy wore.
The *Barfleur*, led by Collingwood,
Where thickest lay the Frenchmen, stood,
And our *Bellerophon*
In battle's van was surely found,
When Pasley met a grievous wound
And Bowyer also bled,
Who were Rear-Admirals of the White,
And had their flags throughout the fight
On board these Seventy-fours.
Then the *Leviathan* for long
Engaged *l'Amerique*, which among
Her consorts safety found.
Till by the *Russell*, under Payne,
L'Amerique was pursued again
And forced to strike her flag ;
When Payne engaged the *Téméraire*,
And fiercely fought the well-matched pair
Until the Frenchman fled.
The *Royal Sovereign* did as well,
And met the fire the *Terrible*,
Three-decker, brought to bear,
Assisted by the *Jacobin*
And other ships, which hoped to win
Ere Howe could render aid ;
Though of the *Royal Sovereign's* power
They had enough in half an hour,
And stood away for Brest.
The *Marlborough* Berkeley quickly laid
L'Impetueux beside, and said
He'd capture her or sink,

And so, with cannon muzzles locked,
The two in close embrace were rocked

Upon the summer sea,
And gently swayed, as when to rest
A babe upon its mother's breast

Is hushed with tenderness.
Though now, alas ! how different far
The sentiments aroused by war

In each contending breast,
As for the drowsy lullaby
The cannon raised its thunder high

Above all other sounds !
Ere long the *Mucius* helped her mate,
And shared the same unlucky fate

Beneath the *Marlborough's* fire,
When lay dismasted all the three,
While Berkeley, wounded grievously,

To Monckton gave command :
Though not without return did o'er
One hundred men like water pour

Their blood that First of June ;
For though the *Mucius* sailed away,
L'Impetueux, ere close of day,

Became the *Marlborough's* prize.
For England's fleet the fight went well.
And when the shades of evening fell

Six battle-ships were Howe's ;
But at what cost to France the knell
Of thousands sounding there could tell.

Who perished in her cause ;
While but three hundred seamen died
And thrice that number bled beside

In all the British fleet.

V.

But yet a deed remains untold,
Reminding us of days of old
 When Blake and Tromp engaged,
Though nothing wrought these warriors bold
Transcends the tale I here unfold
 In stubborn gallantry,
And ne'er their crews in battle's midst
In mood more furious met than didst
 Those of the ships I sing,
Though stirring was the episode
When Tromp, on board the *Brederode*,
 Blake's flagship, *Triumph*, fought,
As glorious 'twas when Harvey won—
This day the British champion,
 Who fell in victory's arms—
A man for valour famed and skill,
One of those heroes born to fill
 A page in history.
The *Brunswick*, with her topsail backed,
The *Vengeur*, like in force, attacked,
 Renaudin in command,
And hooking with her anchor fluke
The channel-plates, all else forsook
 For her companionship :
As might two coursers in the race
When, flying on at lightning pace,
 They near the wished-for goal,
Or as competing charioteers,
Who, lost in clouds of dust, with jeers
 Their fallen rivals greet,
Till, dashing on, the conqueror hears
The wide arena ring with cheers
 To welcome his success !

So, setting sail, before the wind
They sped along and left behind
 Contending friends and foes,
And held in her relentless grip,
The *Brunswick* dragged the fated ship
 Upon her headlong course.
While driving thus before the blast,
The conflict furious raged and fast
 Between the combatants,
And ever as they onward flew,
The shot and grape the seamen slew
 Throughout the crowded decks.
Oh! glorious was the scene displayed
As by the slaughter undismayed,
 Our sailors battled on,
And with their cheers the echoes waked,
And, standing at their quarters, staked
 The honour of the flag.
Not fast enough could they discharge
The cannon of calibre large
 Upon the lower deck,
And the yet heavier carronades
Which guard the fo'c'sle, where, with blades
 All bright and ready drawn,
And pikes clutched fast, the boarders stand
All eagerness, when given command.
 To vault the *Vengeur's* rail,
And on the quarter-deck to land,
Where all of that devoted band
 Would die or win the day!
Said Harvey—as the deck he strode
Amid the showers of grape, which mowed
 The seamen down in heaps,
While from the tops his head above.
A leaden storm of bullets drove
 Like hailstones through the ship—

“ We have her now, and no mistake,
And will the Frenchman keep, and make
Of her the *Brunswick's* prize.”

And good was Harvey as his word
(Which true was ever like his sword)

Upon that glorious day !
As arrows fly, so sped the pair,
Of everything oblivious there

While locked in close embrace,
Like well-matched pugilists, in vain
Who strive the champion's belt to gain,

Or, as contending hawks,
Which, fighting for their prey in air,
Each other's eyes and vitals tear,

But only at the last
To carry to the lonely nest,
High perched upon the mountain's crest,

The mortal injuries
Inflicted by the claw and beak,
And in a lingering death to seek

Reward for all their pains.
Yet nobler prize than champion's belt
Was won by Harvey when he dealt—

Though wounded to the death
And racked with dissolution's throes—
A last despairing blow at foes

Implacable as hell,
Who ever with undying hate
Have followed us since Cressy's date,

From Sluys to Trâfalgâr,
And battle-fields till Waterloo,
And every time disaster knew.

Scarce chequered by success !
Yet all he wished did Harvey earn,
For long enough he lived to learn
(And balm the knowledge brought)

The prize for which all warriors yearn
(The victor's palm) was his, though stern
The fight and great the loss ;*
And now eternal be his rest
In that Valhalla of the blest
Where heroes find repose.
Refusing help, he paused to say,
Ere down the stair he made his way
Into the cockpit drear,
"My lads, remember, never yield
While any man a sword can wield
Or grasp a boarding pike!"
And there for Harvey, 'midst the gloom,
Among the dying made their room,
When surgeons probed his wound
By battle-lanterns burning dim,
Whose feeble light shone full on him,
And left all else obscure.
The flickering rays on every bed
(Mere mattresses and hammocks spread
Upon the oaken planks)
Showed where was laid the restless head,
Or shattered limb, or bandage red
With gore yet welling forth ;
Or fell upon the silent dead,
From whom the soul had barely fled
And found surcease from pain.
Unequal is the painter's art
The cockpit's horrors to impart,
Which words inadequate

*The *Brunswick* had 47 killed and 118 wounded, while 23 guns were dismounted, and she was so shattered in hull and rigging that she bore up for Portsmouth. A national monument was erected in the Abbey to Captains Harvey and Hutt, of the *Queen*, who also fell in Howe's victory.

And far too feeble are to tell,
While much averse am I to dwell
 Upon the scenes of woe,
Which to the mental vision rise,
With stifled groans and long-drawn sighs
 As their accompaniments.
Soon Harvey learned that hope was gone,
But yet some time he lingered on
 Till death relieved his pain,
And when the ship-bell's solemn toll
Announced to all their captain's soul
 Had taken hence its flight,
No seaman on the *Brunswick's* roll
But down his furrowed cheeks there stole
 A tear of vain regret !
Meanwhile the *Vengeur* foundered fast,
And though she struck her flag at last,
 Rehoisted it again,
And sank with colours borne on high,
While rose defiantly the cry
 Above all other sounds :
" The ' Vengeurs ' are prepared to die,
But not to know the infamy
 Of yielding to the foe."
Out of six hundred seamen, who
Were reckoned as the *Vengeur's* crew,
 One-third were slain outright,
And nigh two hundred more were drowned,
While for the rest they safety found
 In passing British boats.
Although the Frankish legend told
(To which the people young and old
 Attach full credence still)
That sank the *Vengeur*, Seventy-four,
With all on board, and Tricolour
 Unstricken at the peak !

VI.

The Hoods in war well played their part
And ne'er these brothers, like in heart

As blood, a foeman feared.

Sir Alexander, who with Howe
Off Ushant served, as Bridport now

A victory achieved

When, cruising in the Channel's mouth,
The French he sighted standing South,

In June the following year,
And crowding canvas, chased until
No breeze remained his sails to fill,

And lay the fleets becalmed.

Their ships were clustered close ahead,
While our's the old *Queen Charlotte* led,

With Douglas in command,
Who brought the *Formidable* to,*
And by his broadsides mauled her so

Linois soon struck his flag.
Two other ships to Bridport struck.
Which had both good and evil luck

Beneath the British flag,
And fell six hundred in the three
Surrendered by the enemy,

Of which the other pair—
Named *Tigre* and *Alexander*—call
To memory Sydney Smith and Ball.
Of Acre and the Nile.

* To "bring to" a ship is to force her to await her adversary. This was the second *Formidable* taken from the French, and took part in Trafalgar as the *Belleisle*. Hawke captured one before, which carried Conflans' flag off Belleisle, and yet a third (Linois' flagship in his action at Algeciras) was taken by Strachan with the rest of Dumanoir's squadron, whose flag she carried at Trafalgar. An English *Formidable* was Rodney's flagship in his great victory over Count de Grasse.

The latter, as her name implies,
To France's navy was a prize
While cruising, under Bligh,
The year before off Scilly Isles,
When she was chased for many miles
By five French battle-ships,
And though each ruse a seaman knows,
When seeking to escape his foes,
Her brave commander tried,
'Twas all in vain, he found, and they
The *Alexander* brought to bay.
Though Bligh disdained to yield,
And fought them all in honour's cause,
And won his countrymen's applause
Although he lost his ship.
The enemy, on beam and bow,
And both her quarters posted now,
His fire soon overcame,
And carried havoc fore and aft,
While aiding them three smaller craft
Were standing "off and on";
And closing in, when every mast
Was shot away, the foe at last
O'erwhelmed the British crew.
All honour be to them and Bligh,
And but a barren victory
Unto their conquerors!

VII.

Like Bridport, Hood became a lord,
An honour by his trusty sword.
And it alone, acquired.
Toulon he held with aid from Spain,
But could not long the town retain
'Gainst Buonaparte's attack,

And valour proved of small avail
 When balanced in the other scale
 With genius such as his ;
 Though ere the British fleet retired
 The ships and arsenal were fired
 By Captain Sydney Smith.
 As Hood Toulon was forced to yield,
 So three years later Jervis sealed
 The fate of Corsica.
 Both losses being to Spaniards due,
 Whose friendship we had cause to rue.
 As well as enmity ;
 And to Gibraltar now confined,
 We for a time to France resigned
 The Med'terranean Sea.
 When Hotham had succeeded Hood
 (A change that boded little good
 Till Jervis followed him),
 A Gallic squadron his withstood,
 When Nelson, in the fighting mood
 For which he'd won a name,
 The *Agamemnon*, Sixty-four,
 Beside *Ça Ira* (carrying more
 Than eighty cannon) laid,
 And would have made the ship his prize,
 When Hotham, to his great surprise,
 Made signals of recall.
 But she gained little by delay,
 As early on the following day
 She and the *Censeur* struck,
 Although in justice we should add
 The hero much assistance had
 From one Montgomery,
 Commander of the *Courageux*,
 And even more from Frederick, who
 The ship *Illustrious* led.

And gallant Gould, the *Bedford's* chief,
And Reeve, who signalled for relief,

The *Captain's* captain he.

Yet Nelson wrath no less displayed
When all pursuit Lord Hotham stayed.

And thus expressed himself :—

“ Now were a single ship but left,
And France of this one not bereft

I'd not be satisfied ! ”

There spoke, with no uncertain sound,
The voice of one whom England found

In her extremity

Than any admiral greater far,

And as renowned in naval war

As Buonaparte on land.

VIII.

The French West Indies General Grey

And Jervis won, though later they

Reconquered were from us ;

While from the Dutch Ceylon was ta'en,

Nor was it yielded up again ;

And though some settlements,

As Java, Banda, we resigned,

Cape Colony, when peace was signed,

Remained beneath our flag.

Lord Keith, then known as Elphinstone,

By soldiers aided Cape Town won

With little loss of life ;

And took their fleet, which snugly lay

At anchor in Saldanha Bay,

Without a shot being fired ;

And founded thus the Empire vast,

Whose limits now have overpast

Zambezi's mighty stream.

Here not the peaceful pioneer
Was 'mong the foremost to appear,
As in Australia's clime,
But in the footsteps of the tar
And "Tommy Atkins," when the war
Had ceased, the settler trod;
And thus, to further England's aims.
An equal place the seaman claims
With him who fights on land.

IX.

When Europe bowed to France the knee,
And Dutch and Spaniards put to sea.
With other Powers in league,—
Which sought, at Buonaparte's behest.
From us our colonies to wrest
And world-wide trade destroy,
And our supremacy contest,
And ne'er from fighting England rest
Until she conquered lay.—
At Camperdown bold Duncan did
Successfully our Navy rid
Of Holland's rivalry;
While off St. Vincent's rugged Cape
In vain Cordova sought escape
From Jervis's attack.
For many months had Duncan watched
De Winter's fleet, and mutiny scotched
On board his battle-ships,
And when it reared its brazen front.
And he was left alone the brunt
To bear of the blockade,
A face as dauntless he displayed
As though behind him was arrayed
All England's Naval might!

Through many a weary winter's night,
Like Vanderdecken's ship, the sight
On that tempestuous coast,
Almost without a break, appeared
Of Duncan's ship, whose form upreared
Itself above the storm !
The slow decay of age had yet
Upon the *Venerable* set
No mark of its approach,
But she the ardour showed of youth,
As every Dutchman there, in truth,
Discovered to his cost ;
And also in the *Triumph* found
A ship familiar with the sound
Of cannon under Blake.
De Winter stood alone on deck,
While all around was death and wreck
Beneath the murderous fire,
And only when remained no truck
On which to hoist the colours, struck
His flag reluctantly.
Eight battle-ships and frigates two
Our sailors made their own, and slew
Above five hundred Dutch ;
While great the loss was on our side,
And Burgess of the *Ardent* died,
Which, with the *Belliqueux*,
And *Triumph*, *Bedford*, *Monarch*, most
Of all the British squadron lost
That fought at Camperdown ;
While fifth the *Venerable* came
Upon the blood-stained list of fame,
And then the *Powerful*.
An incident occurred which shows
The reckless valour England's foes
So oft had cause to rue.

When Duncan's flag was shot away,
And bare the spar was left of stay,
 A seaman climbed the pole,
And to the main-topgallant-mast
Jack Crawford nailed the colours fast,
 Where they untouched remained ;
And when some eighty years had fled,
And he who wrought the deed was dead,
 The folk of Sunderland,
The humble hero's native town,
In memory of Camperdown,
 A statue raised to him.

X.

St. Vincent fell upon a day
Held sacred by all lovers gay
 As sweet St. Valentine's,
When fifteen sail 'gainst twenty-five
Did for the palm of victory strive
 And bore it thence away.
When Calder, Captain of the Fleet,
Asked Jervis if he'd dare to meet
 Such heavy odds, he cried,
"Should fifty heave in sight, I'd lay
My course right onward, come what may,
 Through all the Spanish line,
And as for greater numbers, why.
The more the better, so say I,
 As will the honour be !"
The lofty spirit of a Drake
In those proud words a challenge spake,
 Which, had Cordova heard,
Mayhap discretion would a fear
Have whispered in the Admiral's ear
 That valour would be vain,

And better than to risk a fight
It were to take himself to flight
And meet another day.
The old *Culloden* led the van,
Commanded by a veteran,
The British Navy's pride—
For Troubridge ne'er was known to fail,
Whom Nelson nicknamed "Non-Pareil"
And loved the most of all.
And present there was Collingwood,
Who foremost in the battle stood
Upon the First of June,
And as the *Barfleur*, under Howe,
Manœuvred he with skill, so now
He steered the *Excellent*.
But yet the laurels of the fray
Were gained by one whose starlike ray
Of glory brighter grew,
Until the sun of perfect day
In splendour shone, and passed away
The night of his neglect,
And England owned the radiant orb
Did all the lesser lights absorb
In its effulgent beams !
No need is there the name to tell,
For wielded none the wizard's spell
That victory ensured
To all who followed in his wake,
Save he who died for duty's sake
At fateful Tràfalgàr !
Though four flag-officers had part,
'Twas Nelson showed the stoutest heart,
And won the chief renown,
Whose pennant as a Commodore
The *Captain* off St. Vincent bore,
Which was the third astern ;

But when to join the Spanish lee
 Cordova steered, he eagerly
 To stay him interposed,
 And, "wearing ship" 'gainst orders, passed
 Between the two which lay the last
 Of England's line in rear,
 And threw himself athwart his bows,
 And with the *Trinidad* blows
 Exchanged at pistol-range,
 Till Collingwood approached to aid,
 When, bearing up, all sail he made
 To tackle other ships.
 And then took place the famous scene—
 Without a parallel, I ween,
 In any action known—
 When, boarding the *San Nicolas*,
 The eager Nelson drove the mass
 Of seamen to the bows,
 And when they yielded up their arms
 (For Spaniards have but feeble qualms
 To strike to lesser force)
 The great *San Josef* overhauled,
 Whose crew for quarter also called
 And lowered the Spanish flag!

XI

I sing Sir Sydney Smith's defence
 Of Acre's storied walls, from whence
 The routed foe retired,
 And brilliant was the sailor's feat
 The mightiest soldier thus to beat
 Of any age or clime;
 For though led on by Marshal Lannes
 (Than whom indeed no braver man
 Could any army count)

The French assaults on Acre's works
With seamen from his ships and Turks
He finally repulsed.
His spirit was instilled by Smith
In all he came in contact with
Of high and low degree,
From Djezzar Pasha down to each
Poor private standing in the breach,
Undisciplined and raw,
And thus inspired, it came about
The choicest troops of France in rout
They drove from Acre's walls !
With bitterness quite unconcealed
His anger Buonaparte revealed
That he, the lord of war,
Had been compelled by one to yield,
Who never in the battlefield
A troop of Horse had set,
"A mere post captain," who, alone,
Before a petty fort had shown
The way to baffle him !
"His destiny," he said, "he missed,"
Nor would he any more persist
In schemes of conquest vast,
But sailed away from Egypt's shore,
And gorgeous visions dreamed no more
Of Oriental rule !

XII.

The French at Algeciras lay,
When, sailing from Gibraltar Bay,
Brave Saumarez attacked,
But met repulse at heavier cost
Than Jervis at St. Vincent lost,
And struck the *Hannibal*.

Yet from Gibraltar in a week,
His ships repaired, he sailed to seek
The allied enemy,
For his defeat revenge to take
And do what in him lay to break
Their power in Spanish seas.
Down flocked the people to the Mole,
Until it seemed as though the whole
Of "Gib's" inhabitants
Had come to see them under weigh,
And rang the waters of the bay
With "vivas" and applause;
And when struck up the *Cæsar's* band,
"Come, cheer up, lads," the one on land
With "Britons, strike home," replied.
It was indeed a stirring scene,
And many such a one has been
Enacted at the "Rock,"
When long-expected aid was nigh,
And troops and townsmen thronging by,
All points of 'vantage filled,
And rent the air with loud hurrahs
Of welcome to the gallant tars
Of Rodney and of Howe,
Who landed powder, stores and food,
And made the Navy's promise good
To bring deliverance!
The hero of the day was Keats,
Commanding the *Superb*, the fleet's
Best sailer thought to be,
Who forced the French *Antoine* to strike,
And Spain's *San Carlos* would alike
Have served, but, catching fire,
Before the gale the Spaniard ran,
When yet another three-decked "*San*"
Arrived upon the scene,

And, thinking her an Englishman,
Upon the helpless ship began
 A heavy cannonade,
But, on colliding, her mistake
Discovered all too late to make
 Escape e'en possible.
All words to paint the scene would fail,
As on a more extensive scale
 . The horrors of the Nile
Enacted were upon that night,
When both these battle-ships with quite
 Two thousand men blew up !
The *Venerable*, whose renown
Lord Duncan made at Camperdown,
 Was also nearly lost.
For Captain Hood, of valour tried,
Like both his uncles, steered beside
 A ship of eighty guns,
Whose broadsides shot away each mast,
And, drifting on, the ship was cast
 Upon a reef of rocks,
When Saumarez in sight appeared,
On which Linois to meet him feared,
 And took himself to flight.

XIII.

The world enjoyed a breathing space,
Though soon all Europe face to face
 In deadly conflict closed ;
For scarce was Amiens' Treaty writ,
And barely dry the ink on it,
 Ere Buonaparte again
The smoking torch of war relit,
And challenged England, led by Pitt,
 To battle to the death.

About three months ere 'Tràfalgàr,
The next engagement of the war
Took place off Finisterre,
And Villeneuve found his twenty sail
Against fifteen of small avail
When Admiral Calder led,
Who took the *Firme* and *Rafael*, though
'Twas deemed at home a greater blow
He might have dealt next day,
And by the verdict of a Court,
For which Sir Robert Calder sought,
His conduct censure met.
'Twas hard, it cannot be denied,
But Nelson, who had lately died,
A lofty standard set;
And thus comparisons were rife—
'Tween one who perished in the strife,
But captured nineteen sail,
And him who two had homeward sent—
Which were to Calder's detriment,
And hence the reprimand.
Sir Richard Strachan had better luck,
As Dumanoir his colours struck
Soon after 'Tràfalgàr,
When every captain sought a foe,
And had a Gallic ship in tow
Ere fell the shades of night;
And when was stilled the cannon's roar
Seven hundred men on board the four
Or dead or wounded lay,
And brilliant was the deed achieved
By Strachan, who, with his crews, received
The thanks of Parliament.

XIV.

Off San Domingo Duckworth wrought
A victory complete as aught
 Within these pages told ;
And though his ships were more by two,
In weight of metal as in crew
 The French were stronger far.
His flagship, under Keats, was first,
Who off Gibraltar slaked his thirst
 For fame with Saumarez,
And *l'Alexandre* compelled to stand,
And 'gainst *l'Imperial* tried his hand,
 The flagship of Leisseignes,*
Till she was mastless, and ashore
A wreck was driven, with loss of o'er
 Five hundred of her men !
No better fared the rest that day,
And ere had ceased the hard-fought fray
 Ill matters went for France ;
For to the *Donegal* the *Brave*
And *Jupiter* submission gave,
 While for the *Diomedé*,
The *Atlas* drove her high and dry,
And struck the *Alexandre*, when nigh
 A wreck, to Stopford's fire.
The foremost Cochrane was to face,
With all the valour of his race,
 The great three-decker's fire,
On board his ship, *Northumberland*,
Until she drifted on the land,
 And the *Canopus* helped,

* The *Imperial* carried 130 guns and 1200 men, while our largest ship was the *Canopus*, 80, a French prize, like the *Donegal*, Captain Pulteney Malcolm, late *Hoche*, captured off the Irish coast in 1798.

With Louis' colours at the fore,
 Which at the Nile, as *Franklin*, bore
 The standard of the Gaul.
 The next occasion Duckworth fought,
 With Louis he "a Tartar caught,"
 (Or, shall we say, a Turk ?)
 For then the Straits called Dardanelles
 His squadron forced, though truth compels
 No flattering tale to tell
 Of Duckworth in the Bosphorus,
 Who sought a treaty to discuss
 With Turkey's Padishah.
 Fair Pera and the Golden Horn—
 Which ne'er before a fleet had borne,
 Arrayed in hostile guise—
 He made all ready to attack,
 His ships with England's Union Jack
 Displayed at mizen peak,
 And swore he'd seize the Turkish fleet,
 And gave but half an hour to treat,
 Although he stayed a week
 On finding that the Porte, unmoved
 By threats three times repeated, proved
 As stolid as "Sublime !"
 Thus Duckworth *re infecta* sailed,
 His mission having wholly failed
 The Sultan to coerce ;
 And but a score of granite shot
 Were all the British Admiral got
 In payment of his claims !

XV.

In Copenhagen's second fall
 Had Gambier's fleet a part, though small,
 For most the troops achieved,

Which may be said when Java's isle
And Monte Video came awhile
Beneath the British flag,
Mauritius, too, a naval force,
Combined with soldiers, Foot and Horse,
Brought under English rule,
And henceforth to the present hour,
Without dispute by any Power,
This island we have held,
Which had the refuge been for years
Of ships-of-war and privateers,
Which on our commerce preyed.
But ere the Gallic power we broke,
Ill fortune cost us at a stroke
Four frigates off the isle,
Though two were in Port Louis found,
Where they in action went aground,
And the other two were burnt.
The *Nereid* was among the four
Surrendered to the Tricolour,
Although, of all her crew,
But fifty seamen at the end
Remained the colours to defend,
While she dismasted lay;
And for her captain, Willoughby,
Who in the fray had lost an eye,
He would not quit the deck,
But in the good old English way—
With cannon-shot and cutlass-play—
Received the enemy!
Few seamen had more service seen
And none indeed had wounded been
So oft or dangerously,
But as he put it, "Wide awake
He kept his weather eye to take
The bearings of the foe,"

And though he'd but a single one,
That did the duty two had done

Until the close of war,
And for the rest Her Majesty
Conferred on him the K.C.B.

Earned thirty years before.
Mauritius lost, no more had France
Against her ancient foe a chance

Of Empire in the East,
Though England's greatness to enhance
We left the French on sufferance

In India at the Peace.
And as their helots, when in drink,
To warn how low a man could sink,

The Romans showed their sons,
So they an object-lesson gave,
Of foes the rulers of the wave
Permitted to remain !

XVI.

Three British frigates battle gave
To three of France off Tamatave,

And prizes made of two,
But for the third, she feared to fight,
And crowding canvas, took to flight,

For which, on reaching Brest,
Her captain was to trial brought,
And on conviction by the Court

Was shot for cowardice.

A British squadron, under Hoste,
To action brought off Lissa's coast

Dubourdieu's allied fleet,
And, though with half his guns and crews.
The gage of battle to refuse

Was far, indeed, from Hoste,

Who—raising in his ship the cry,
“Remember Nelson, lads, and die
If needs, but never strike”—
A pair of frigates drove ashore
And took as prize as many more,
And well the action showed,
Although on scale but limited,
That though the hero long was dead,
His spirit still survived !

XVII.

And here I'd give a sketch of those
Immortalised in Smollett's prose,
Who, to the quarter-deck,
The habits and the modes of thought
Of dwellers in the fo'c'sle brought
In their simplicity ;
Though in exaggerated force,
As do all such as have recourse
To unfamiliar ways.
A race they were whose daily grog
Was dear to them as life, their log
The single book they knew ;
Who carried in the cheek a quid,
And chewed tobacco just as did
The seaman and Marine ;
And of their language—well, we'd say
“'Twas only pretty Fanny's way,”
And had no ill intent.
With valour gifted past belief,
They'd go to certain death as lief
As to a wedding feast ;
And honourable to a fault,
Were true to friend as to their salt ;
And though indeed they might

Give frequent utterance to a growl,
Were ever to the fore, though foul
 The wind and fierce the storm ;
And they'd religion of a sort,
Which fear of the Almighty taught,
 Whose presence on the sea
In all His works was testified,
In whom they sought in life a guide
 And refuge at its close.
If they to oaths gave frequent vent,
Why, all well knew they nothing meant
 And no one suffered harm,
For of a surety honest Jack's
Morality was somewhat lax ;
 And yet these officers
Were ever to his failings blind,
Provided these were of a kind
 Left discipline intact,
And courage free from slightest taint,
When he appeared a very saint
 In their indulgent eyes !
Such was the race, in manners rough
And rude of speech, whom no rebuff
 Could from their purpose turn,
And naught on earth or sea could daunt,
But who were never heard to vaunt
 The deeds they had achieved,
Or to indulge in idle brag ;
And sacred held their country's flag
 As though from heaven derived,
For men of this old-fashioned school
Regarded Dame Britannia's Rule
 As one of Right Divine !
Even death and wounds they held as vain
So that they could but glory gain
 And quick promotion win ;

And should they haply booty earn,
'Twas given or lent without return
To any needy friend,
Or else extravagantly spent
In wine or women, as the bent
Of each one most inclined,—
Like some who served before the mast,
Who could not spend their pay too fast
In dice or drinks all round,
And for their share of money prize,
It melted under beauty's eyes,
Or what they thought were such !
These were in battle at their best,
For which, indeed, they showed a zest
No other joys could yield.
Stripped was each sailor to the waist,
Which by a belt was tightly braced,
So as to free the limbs
And give the muscles better play ;
While naked feet and hands had they,
And as they worked the guns,
Begrimed with powder to the eyes,
Each man his fellow cheered with cries
To fight the battle out
Till France's flag came fluttering down,
And " Johnny Crapeau " learned to own
His vanquisher in him !
Oh, Albion ! by thy sons beloved,
The home of seamen well approved
From Alfred's days to now,
May long continued be the breed,
And in thy day of utmost need
Such rally round thy flag !

CANTO IV.

EPISODES of the Revolutionary War—Some Cutting-out Affairs—
The *Hermione* and *Surprise*; *Desirée* and *Dart*; *Cerbère* and
Viper; *Chevette* and Boats of a Squadron—Capture of the
Hercule by the *Mars*; of the *Forte* by the *Sybille*; and of the
Pique by the *Blanche*; and deaths of Captains Hood, Cooke, and
Faulknor—The *Nymphe* and *Cléopâtre*—Barlow takes the
Nereide and *Africaine*—Death of Captain Hardinge, of the *San*
Fiorenzo—Our Frigate Captains—Loss of the *Droits de l'Homme*
—Dispersal of the French Expedition to Ireland—Capture of
the *Rivoli*—Seymour takes the *Thetis* and *Niemen*—Captains
Veo and Stewart—Lord Cochrane's Exploits.

I.

OUR tars their valour testified
Not only in the battle's tide
 When fleets in line engaged,
And in the duel to the death,
When, closely locked, the cannon's breath
 Obscured the combatants,
But in the boat attacks by night,
When darkness shrouded from the sight
 What lanterns failed to show,
Whose feeble and uncertain light
The horrors of the desperate fight
 But served to magnify,
As forward now, and backward then,
The ebb and flow of struggling men
 Eddied along the deck!
The boarders, starting after dark,
Would pull all night, and when the bark,
 The object of attack,

In sight appeared, with ringing cheers
Made straight for her, inspiring fears
To their own breasts unknown,
And clambering up, "hand over fist,"
No human power could long resist
Persistency like theirs,
For though oft beaten back, their luck
They'd try again, till British pluck
Ensured its due reward.
But ere they won, the gallant few
Employed each feint and trick they knew
To gain the upper hand
With boarding-pike and cutlass thrust
For which with warranty their trust
These noble fellows placed ;
And battling thus for mastery,
Each forward step with shouts of glee
They hailed, till, standing there,
The winners of the blood-stained prize,
The decks resounded with the cries
Of dear-bought victory !
Oh, for a Scott's or Homer's pen
The valour of our countrymen
In verse to illustrate,
But failing such, I will assay
In all humility to pay
My homage to the tars,
Those brave but nameless heroes, who
Performed such deeds of derring-do
As ne'er were known before !
Of all the feats perhaps the best,
(Though scarce more daring than the rest),
On the Caraccas coast
Was wrought by Captain Hamilton,
Of the *Surprise*, than whom was none
More valiant in the fleet.

When mutinied the *Hermione's* crew,
Her tyrant captain first they slew
With all his officers,
And then surrendered her to Spain,
From whom to win her back again
Was Hamilton's resolve,
And that although she lay in port.
Protected by a Spanish fort,
And warned of the attack.
To sixty men he gave the word
The lost *Hermione* to board,
Though odds were five to one :
And Hamilton was first of all,
And foremost from the peak to haul
The snow-white flag of Spain,
When from aloft he loosed each sail.
And steered the ship with favouring gale
Out of Cabello port ;
Though ere his men victorious stood
One hundred died of Spanish blood.*
And his was freely shed.
Thus did the sloop-of-war, *Surprise*.
Make the *Hermione* her prize,
And as for Hamilton,
For ever will he stand among
The victors in that sailor throng
Who crowd our history's page ;
And never British monarch made
A worthier knight, or accolade
Conferred for braver deed !
A captive made when nearing home.
He saw Napoleon, freshly come
From Italy, when said

* No less than 119 Spaniards were slain and 97 wounded out of 300.
forming the *Hermione's* crew.

The hero of the Alpine heights,
 And Lodi's and Arcola's fights,
 Who honoured gallantry
 And with distinction treated him—
 "No ship the sea could safely swim
 With such as Hamilton."

II.

Perhaps as brilliant was the part
 Performed by Campbell, of the *Dart*,
 A sloop of thirty guns,
 Who boldly entering Dunkirk Port.
 The *Desirée*, a frigate, sought
 To carry off to sea.
 He ran his bowsprit 'neath her stay
 As safe and snugly moored she lay,
 And boarding with his crew,
 The hawsers cut, and under way
 Was soon the Gallic *Desirée*,
 Which lost a hundred men,
 But bore aloft the Union Jack,
 As with the *Dart* in company, back
 To Portsmouth Campbell sailed !
 Although impossible to beat,
 As brilliant was young Coghlan's feat,
 Who carried off as prize
 The French *Cerbère*, a brig-of-war,
 In presence of a Seventy-four,
 With batteries close at hand,
 And having ninety men, or more
 Than four times his, in all a score,
 Including officers.
 Long swayed the combat to and fro,
 As when two wrestlers seek to throw
 Each other in the ring,

And while each movement they observe,
Their muscles strain and every nerve
Exert to its extent.
Now first the one is uppermost,
Until his foe the ground he lost
Regains with interest,
And by a dexterous turn or twist
The skilfuller antagonist
Acquires the upper hand,
And vain is greater strength of wrist
To fling him off or more resist
With prospect of success ;
When, prone upon the arena's plain,
No more he strives his feet to gain
The contest to renew !
Though two attempts had failed to board.
The third endeavour met reward,
And Coghlan, wounded, stood
Victorious with the *Ti-per's* men
(Of whom were killed and wounded ten)
On board the brig *Cerbère* !

III.

But unsurpassed for gallantry
By any deed achieved will be
The last of these I sing—
The cutting-out of *la Chevette*,
Of twenty guns, a French corvette,
Which lay in readiness,
With o'er three hundred men, all told,
(Or, with some troops on board, two-fold
The party that attacked)
And yet the dauntless British tars,
By Maxwell led, with loud hurrahs
The Frenchman carried off !

Each had his own allotted place—
The major part the foe to face,
And others (while these sought
The enemy on deck to slay)
To cut the cables, steer, and lay
Aloft the sails to loose,
Or man the halliards with a will
The bellying canvas so's to fill
When fairly "sheeted home"—
No part by Maxwell was forgot,
Or task it is a seaman's lot
In war to execute.
Each with a cutlass was begirt,
And pistols in the belt, alert
To clamber up the sides,
Or carried else a boarding-pike
To thrust, and tomahawk to strike
Or sever any rope,
And every man, however armed,
Had to the work before him warmed
Long ere the ship was reached,
And when this happened, bravely tried
His duty to perform, or died
In making the attempt!
Six miles they pulled with muffled oar
And all in silence, ere they saw
The vessel close at hand,
And now, as struck the midnight chime
Upon her bells, had come the time
To strike for victory,
And each his heart and muscles nerved
As he the *Chevrette's* hull observed,
In size a battle-ship's
(Or so it seemed amid the haze),
With masts appearing to the gaze
To taper to the stars.

But now the drums to quarters beat,
And rose the sound of hurrying feet.

And voices struck the ear,
As hoarsely rang the stern command
For every man "to bear a hand,"

While thickly glimmered forth,
Like glow-worms shining in the dark.
The lanterns' gleam and port-fires' spark

In readiness to fire !

All this they marked with rapid glance,
Though its effect was to enhance

The rapture of the fight—

That *gaudia certaminis*

Which every warrior feels, I wis,

When charging on the foe—

Still heightened when the fire of ball
And grape and canister on all

The boats fell furiously,

As for each quarter, bow and waist.

Unheeding aught, the sailors raced,

Nine cutters' crews in all.

No stay was made to fire, but quick
Upon the Frenchman's deck the pick

Of England's Navy stood,

With pikes and cutlasses in hand,

A dashing and heroic band

As ever sailed the sea ;

And promptly each his task fulfilled.

With resolution stern instilled

That nothing could appal.

As once the Scotsmen round their King
At Flodden fought "in desperate ring,"

So they by Maxwell's side,

But with a happier ending now,

When victory shed on every brow

The halo absent then !

While battling on the deck some stout
Young fellows, orders carrying out,
 Sprang nimbly up the shrouds,
And loosed from topsail-yards the sail,
Though round them rained the leaden hail
 When they had been observed ;
While to the helm one Wallis ran,
As, tomahawk in hand, a man
 The hempen cables cut,
And though he bled at every pore,
The ship the steersman seaward bore, -
 The prize of victory !
Twelve officers and seamen died,
And sixty wounded were beside.
 Who fought beneath our flag ;
While ninety Frenchmen fell alone,
The *Chevrette's* captain being one,
 And six of ward-room rank.
No martial deed of high *emprise*,
By seamen wrought upon the seas
 Can this for pluck excel,
And though by Edmund Burke 'twas said,
" The age of Chivalry had fled,"
 No feat of olden time,
When knights the captive maid to free
Would fight with any enemy,
 With Maxwell's can compare.

IV.

Some captains fell when in command,
Who glory shed upon the land
 Which boasted them her sons.
Among the best of these was Hood,
Who, crossing o'er the Channel, stood
 For Brest, where lay *l'Hercule*.

When fiercely fought the Seventy-fours,
The *Mars* at first athwart her hawse,
Where she her anchor dropped.
Till drifting on, she ranged beside.
When Hood the Frenchman closely plied
With shot and canister.
So deadly their embrace and near,
The guns below were fired in rear
Of many of the ports.
The woodwork setting all aflame,
When firemen with their buckets came
And dashed the water o'er ;
And strove the French, now desperate grown.
To board the *Mars*, whose decks were strown
With ninety stricken forms,
Until, when nigh three hundred bled,
L'Hercule, become a slaughter shed,
Surrendered to the *Mars*.
An incident untold remains,
Which, set against the victory's gains,
Its glory greatly dimmed.
A bullet at the battle's close
Of one of her most dreaded foes
The Gallic Navy rid.
When Hood upon the deck lay low,
Though lived he long enough to know
The enemy was his ;
But not, alas ! the prize to steer
To Plymouth Sound, or praises hear
From King and countrymen ;
And when he drew his latest sigh,
On board the *Mars* no seaman's eye
But moistened with a tear.

V.

The *Sybil*'s captain, Cooke by name,
(Long be it handed down to fame)
Expired in victory's arms,
As did another Cooke upon
The deck of the *Bellerophon*,
The day of Tráfalgar.
The *Sybil*, like so many more,
Had borne aloft the Tricolour
Till by the *Romney* lowered :
And for her French antagonist,
Few frigates could the *Forte* resist.
As she was held to be
Among her class the finest craft,
One which at all pursuers laughed,
Or, if needs were, defied :
And so of all the Eastern world,
Whose waters saw her flag unfurled,
The terror she became.
The *Forte* was by the *Sybil* spied,
And lying by the Frenchman's side
Was seen a merchantman—
As might the spider and the fly,
Ere one has sucked the other dry
While tangled in its web—
Though short the time elapsed ere Cooke
On her the tables turned, and took
The frigate *Forte* in tow.
Between them fiercely raged the fight,
Which lasted through the live-long night.
Almost at pistol-shot,
The lanterns lighting up alone
The crowded decks, where cheer and groan
Confusedly arose ;

While flashes from the muzzles told
How best to point the guns, as rolled
The ships from side to side.
The *Sybil* early raked the *Fort*,
And that at cannon-range so short,
Destruction dire ensued,
And rounding on the frigate's lee.
Upon her quarter gallery
Her fire then brought to bear.
Both captains ready were to die,
But scorned to yield, or thence to fly
While power remained to fight.
And Cooke and, equally, de Long
Eternal glory won among
The heroes of the sea,
For faithful unto death were they.
Each falling in the deadly fray
Upon his quarter deck !
Died sixty-six on board the *Fort*,
And eighty wounded seamen sought
The surgeon's aid below,
Which told with eloquence a tale
Of brave defence without avail,
Because of little skill,
And blood like water freely shed,
With barren honour to the dead
The only recompense !
Three hundred shot her sides had ripped,
And guns from carriages unshipped.
While for the prize's spars,
The masts and bowsprit all were gone.
And of her boats there was not one
That could be kept afloat ;
And furrowed were her decks and ploughed,
Resembling much a field unsowed,
Though ready for the corn.

And leaked the *Forte* at every roll,
 Until they plugged each gaping hole
 'Tween wind and water made ;
 And in this plight was towed to port
 Up Hooghly's stream, the frigate thought
 The finest then afloat !
 Yet not for long remained she thus,
 A symbol most conspicuous
 Of our supremacy ;
 But under Captain Hardyman,
 The *Sybil*'s First Lieutenant, ran
 Ashore on Jiddah's reefs,
 Where soon a wreck became the *Forte*,
 And broken up by Arabs, nought
 Remained her fate to tell.

VI.

The year of grace was 'Ninety-five,
 And gallant Cooke was yet alive.
 His victory unwon,
 When Faulknor equal pluck displayed
 As when the *Sybil*'s captain laid
 His ship beside the *Forte*.
 The action 'tween the *Blanche* and *Pique*,
 Which sailed from Guadaloupe to seek
 Her eager British foe,
 Was quite a fair and stand-up fight.
 With challenges in old and right
 Good fashion interchanged ;
 And of the captains France possessed,
 The *Pique*'s was reckoned 'mong the best,
 While more than seventy men,
 With heavier metal, had she now.
 So that the chances went to show
 The victory would be hers.

The *Blanche*, which forged ahead too fast,
One topsail "laid against the mast"
And "braced up sharp" the rest,
And waited while the *Pique* drew near,
Her crew as destitute of fear
As when, in Camelot's lists,
A knight of old to break a spear
His charger reined, and burned to hear
The signal to begin!
'Twas night's high noon when, side by side,
And sailing with the wind and tide,
The frigates opened fire,
And naught the gloom, which shrouded all,
Did either of the crews appal,
Who cheered defiantly;
While not alone from broadsides came
The lightning tongues of lurid flame
That lit the midnight sky,
But from the decks the musketry
Continuous poured, as though the sea
Belched forth its hidden fires!
Thus dashed they on in mad career,
Like flying-fish impelled by fear
To skim the surges' crest,
While chased by albacore and shark,
Only to fall an easy mark
To gull and albatross:
Or as a courser, at whose heels
The wolves give tongue, or one that feels
The rowels of the spur,
When nigh he draws the winning post,
And of the starters, once a host,
A single one remains;
Or like the Roman charioteer,
Who to the goal approaches near,
And, lost in whirling dust,

And 'mid a hurricane of cheers,
That blinds his eyes and stuns his ears,
The victor's palm receives !
So now they sped at furious rate,
Each seaman's heart with hope elate,
And resolute to win,
Until the *Pique*, her enemy
To fight unable and to fly
Despairing, tried to board ;
But Faulknor bared his trusty brand,
And backward drove the swarming band,
Who thrice their luck essayed,
Though vain was every effort made,
And only was the slaughter stayed
When breathless they retired.
To show them how the trick was done,
Now Faulknor mustered everyone
Could from his gun be spared,
And sought their bowsprit fast to lash
Unto his capstan-head, a dash
Upon the *Pique* to make ;
And crying, " Follow me on board,"
Forth from his scabbard drew his sword
To lead the *Blanche's* men,
When suddenly he met a check,
And, staggering forward, fell on deck,
Pierced by a musket ball !
So Faulknor—in the very hour
When fortune placed within his power
A frigate of the French,
The prize for which so long he sought,
And now so desperately had fought—
The cup, with victory filled,
Saw snatched from out his eager grip
Just as he lifted to his lip
The intoxicating draught !

The frigates, parting, fouled again,
When sought the Frenchmen, though in vain.

To disengage the *Pique*,
And when our men her bowsprit lashed
Unto the stump of mizen-mast,
A raking fire they poured
From two small after carronades,
While from their tops the hand-grenades

Her upper quarters cleared ;
And as the ship, dismasted, rolled,
Remorselessly the *Blanche* her hold

Upon the *Pique* retained !
Soon after five—when early morn
Was breaking o'er the scene forlorn

Presented by the *Pique*,
And showed her brave commander dead,
With seventy-five of those he led,

And wounded many more—
Some Frenchmen from the bowsprit end
Our seamen hailed a boat to send

Submission to receive,
And thus was lost upon her coast
The smartest frigate France could boast
Of all in her Marine !

VII.

Lives there the bard but would in song
Be proud the praises of de Long

And Cooke to make his theme,
And Hood, commander of the *Mars*,
And Faulknor and the gallant tars

Of all the ships engaged ?
Though young the trio were in years,
Their crop of glory ripe appears
As any veteran's,

And sculptured marbles tell the deeds
 These heroes wrought, though none there needs
 To keep their memories green,
 For more enduring than St. Paul's,
 Our history's page the names recalls
 Of Faulknor, Cooke and Hood.

VIII.

Of frigate actions there was one,
 Which happ'd when war had scarce begun.
 Deserving special note.
 A famous captain, named Pellew,
 Who in the *Nymph* his pennant flew,
 Engaged the *Cleopâtre*,
 And, boarding, her commander slew
 And overcame her stronger crew,
 Who struck the "Bleu, Blanc, Rouge,"
 As Frenchmen call the Tricolour,
 Which they as ardently adore
 As we the Union Jack
 (By Britons named "Red, White and Blue").
 Or, with devotedness as true,
 Our cousins o'er the sea
 Their star-bespangled banner praise
 And loud Columbia's pæan raise
 Unto the "Stars and Stripes."
 Some eighty sailors more had she,
 But our's superior gunnery
 And seamanship displayed,
 Until Pellew cut matters short.
 And, boarding with his fellows, brought
 The Frenchmen to their knees,
 And hoisting at the peak our Jack,
 Displaced the Gallic flag, and back
 To Portsmouth steered his course.

The French commander ere he died,
 A code of flags to swallow tried,
 Confided to his care,
 The secret of the signals thus
 In the hour of death to keep from us.
 But in his agony,
 His teeth in his commission set,
 And in the act, while chewing yet,
 The hero breathed his last !
 The *Nymphe*, some fourteen years before,
 When carrying Williams' pennant, bore
 The *Flora* off as prize,
 Whose crew their utmost strove to board,
 And tried to carry by the sword
 What cannon failed to win :
 And o'er the *Castor* she prevailed,
 A frigate which from Holland hailed,
 And captured many more.

IX.

The *Crescent* in those palmy days
 Could two commanders boast, whose praise
 For skill and enterprise
 Was sounded loud on every tongue.
 And their achievements will among
 Our proudest be enshrined.
 These, Saumarez and Collingwood,
 Were seamen tried and patriots good
 As any England had,
 And as for Collingwood, his name
 For noble qualities became
 Almost a synonym :
 While Saumarez but little less
 Renown for pluck and skilfulness
 On board the *Crescent* gained.

Which took the *Berkeley* under one,
And the *Reunion* later on

When Saumarez had charge.
The last was knighted by the King,
But for the first of those I sing,

Heroic Collingwood,
Who served with Howe in June, and saw
St. Vincent's fight, till Trâfalgâr

No title he received,
Though when his lordship came to die,
His was the honour close to lie

Beside his friend and chief.
And Barlow was a sailor-knight,
To reckon whom her bravest might

The fleet of any Power ;
Although our own of such could boast,
To meet the enemy, a host

As long as Banquo's line.
The *Nereide* struck to Barlow's hail,
The same whose capture to bewail

Was Willoughby's sad lot ;
And bright the bays his brow surround,
And dazzling was the halo crowned

The *Phœbe's* gallant crew,
When vanquished they the *Africaine*,
A frigate duel will remain

Among the bloodiest known.
With fury raged the equal fight,
And like a shambles was the sight

The Frenchmen's decks displayed,
For died two hundred to a man,
Among them being a veteran,

Commanding troops on board,
With Saulnier, too, the Commodore,
While wounded were as many more,
A number mortally.

Amelia named, without success,
Although with equal stubbornness,
She fought the *Arethuse*
With cannon muzzles closely locked,
And as the frigates gently rocked
Upon the slumbering sea,
Through portholes men each other hacked.
While side by side, with topsails backed
And yard-arms hooked, they lay,
Until of slaughter they'd enough.
When both the combatants made off,
Their honour satisfied. *

X.

One Hardinge fell at early age,
Who might upon the martial stage
Have played as great a part
As that his soldier-brother filled,
Who stood by Moore when he was killed
Upon Corunna's heights,
And saw on Ligny's bloody field
Bold Blucher to Napoleon yield.
(When Hardinge lost an arm),
And faced the storm of leaden hail
When Empire trembled in the scale
The day of Ferozeshah.
The *San Fiorenzo* off the isle
Of fair Ceylon had cruised awhile
To find the *Piémontaise*.
On sighting which she "tautened brace"
And "flattened sheet" to give her chase,
And so a running fight

*The *Amelia* (late *Africaine*) had seven officers (including four lieutenants) and forty-four men killed, and her captain, eight officers, and 81 men wounded.

For two long summer days ensued,
While Hardinge eagerly pursued
And brought her to a stand.
The fight was stubborn 'tween the pair,
Which raced along with breezes fair
And strong upon the beam,
And wounded were or slain outright
On board the Gallic frigate quite
Eight score of mariners,*
And nigh escaped the *Piémontaise*,
When Hardinge "went about in stays"
And brought her to again.
Yet lived he not, alas! to reap
The laurels hardly won—though deep
He'd drunk of glory's cup
Some years before, when cutting out,
With sixty men, or thereabout,
The Dutch brig *Atalante*,—
And wrote the General at Ceylon,
"The victory second was to none
Our Navy has achieved."
With minute guns and flags half-mast.
The youthful hero, life o'erpast,
Was laid to rest ashore,
And stately was the monument
By England raised, though naught it lent
His glory to enhance,
Save feebly to commemorate
His valiant deeds and tragic fate,
And but a fleeting thought

* The *Piémontaise*, 40, which commenced the action with 566 men, had 48 killed and 112 wounded, and the *San Fiorenzo* (formerly the *Minerve*, captured in Corsica) lost 37 men out of 168. A monument has been erected in St. Paul's to Captain Hardinge, at the expense of the nation, as also to Hood, Cooke, and Faulknor, in commemoration of whose death a tragedy was written and performed at Drury Lane Theatre.

From passers-by to supplicate,
(Who courage 'mong the virtues rate
The first and highest one),
And even, perchance, a tear to crave
For one who found an early grave
Upon a distant shore !

XI.

The frigate squadron Warren led,
Of England's foes so long the dread,
Could count, 'among the rest,
The *Arethusa*—by Pellew
Commanded till the *Flora* flew
His flag as Commodore—
And the *Melampus*, forty-two,
Victorious o'er the *Résolue*
When led by Graham Moore.
And *Anson* and *Artois* were there,
Which took the *Revolutionaire*
When knighthood Nagle gained :
While Keats and Countess, Strachan and Wells,
And Durham—each the record swells
Of victory singly won.
Among the brothers, like in heart
As blood, who took a leading part
Throughout the hostilities,
The Cochranes were among the best,
And so the Brisbanes were confessed,
And Brentons, too, to be ;
While for the Seymours and Pellews,
Can anyone their claims refuse
To take a foremost place ?
They captured fort and battery,
And every keel that ploughed the sea
Engaged with eagerness,

And signal stations burnt on land
And terror struck on every hand
 In Holland, France, and Spain,
Where all remained on the *qui vîve*,
Each tale and rumour to believe,
 Howe'er extravagant,
Of these wild rovers of the deep,
Who sleepless vigils seemed to keep
 And were ubiquitous.

XII.

About this time a Seventy-four,
The *Droits de l'Homme*, was driven ashore
 By Reynolds and Pellew,
Who, taking post on either side,
Had chased the ship, which wind and tide
 Fast drifted towards the rocks,
And raking her alternately,
As in the sea she rolled, well-nigh
 Unrigged the *Droits de l'Homme*,
While through the day the rising gale
To shreds and tatters tore each sail
 Until the night approached.
In tackling her the *Amazon*
Was carried high and dry upon
 The rugged Penmarck rocks,
On which the crew their ship forsook,
And thus escaped the end o'ertook
 The luckless Seventy-four,
Though Reynolds but postponed his fate
And perished at a later date
 When foundered the *St. George*.
Now died the commodore, la Crosse,
And heavy was, indeed, the loss
 Befell the *Droits de l'Homme*,

Which helpless lay upon the rocks,
While peasants gathered round in flocks
And efforts made to save
The thirteen hundred souls on board,
Of whom two hundred were restored
Unto their countrymen ;
And for the others, in the fight,
Or in the gale the following night
They perished to a man !

XIII.

When France endeavoured the Emerald Isle
From her allegiance to beguile,
Some soldiers were despatched
To raise the standard of revolt,
That those disloyal to their salt
Might rally to the cause.
But as a cat keeps watch for mice,
So English frigates thwarted twice
The French Directory's plans ;
And Humbert yielded, foot and horse.
Ere France's fleet could reinforce
Her troops on Irish soil.
Three battle-ships and frigates four,
With Borlase Warren commodore.
This failure brought about,
And took the *Hoche*, now *Donegal*,
(Which long the flag of Admiral
Sir Pulteney Malcolm bore),
And of nine vessels sailed from Brest
But two returned, and all the rest
Were added to our fleet.
The *Anson*, under Durham, made
The *Loire* her prize, which dearly paid
For her temerity ;

But yet the victory o'er the Gaul
By far the fiercest one of all,
Was that the *Fisgard* won
Against the *Immortalité*,
Whose captain perished in the fray
With seven-and-fifty more.
She first her utmost tried to fly,
Manœuvring long and skilfully,
Although of greater force ;
But when the *Fisgard* brought her to,
The " meteor flag " of England flew
Where that of France was shown,
Though water chin-deep in the hold
On board the British frigate told
How fierce had been the fight.

XIV.

Some duels yet remain to tell,
Which England's roll of triumphs swell,
As equally in each
Disaster was the Frenchman's share
And glory to each Briton there
Upholding freedom's cause.
Two Seventy-fours in Adria's sea,
Victorious named and *Rivoli*,
Their countries championed forth,
When out of sight of land they met,
And, with a crowd of canvas set,
At point-blank range engaged ;
And 'twas a thrilling sight to watch
The rival ships (an equal match
In armament and crew)—
With royals spread on every mast,
Which bent beneath the favouring blast,
Now blowing right abaft—

The surges ride in headlong race,
While tautened every sheet and brace
Almost to breaking point,
And ceaselessly, with horrid clang,
The guns' discordant music rang
Above the gentler strain
Of billows dashing 'gainst the bow,
When soft Italian breezes blow
Upon a summer sea.
But dismal was at set of sun
The scene its slanting rays shone on
Aboard the *Rivoli*!
The royal-masts were shot away
Long ere the cannon ceased to play
Upon the Seventy-four,
Whose hull, with portholes painted gay,
Shot-riddled on the ocean lay
And scarce could keep afloat ;
While all the sails in ribbons hung.
And that proud flag, whose folds had flung
Defiance to the foe,
Now to the peak in tatters clung,
Though its defenders praises wrung
E'en from their conquerors !
Four hundred men, one-half her crew,
And nigh one-fourth the victor's too.
Had suffered in the fray,
And *Rivoli* for France will stand
(As once for victory on land)
For dire defeat at sea,
While Talbot and *Victorious*
A triumph now denote for us
As erst for Buonaparte.

XV.

The *Amethyst*, one darksome night,
When Seymour led, till morning's light
The *Thetis* close engaged,
Which mastless, with her captain killed
And decks with dead and dying filled,
Was fain at length to strike.
The *Niemen* next encountered she,
And brought her to upon the lee
About the close of day,
And through the night they battled on
Without a stop till daylight shone
Upon the scene forlorn,
For both lost mizen-masts and main,
And six-score wounded men and slain
The *Niemen's* quarters strewed ;*
While as for Seymour, the " Gazette "
Soon posted him a Baronet
And captain of the prize.
An *Amethyst* the gallant Yeo
Off San Domingo shattered so
At range of pistol shot,
That soon he had the ship in tow,
With her commander lying low
And o'er two hundred men.
While stood no mast from stem to bow
And e'en the bowsprit at the prow
Was trailing in the sea !
No officer more dash and go
Many a time and oft did show
Than he throughout the war,

* The loss of the *Thetis* was no less than 134 killed and 102 wounded and that of the *Niemen* 47 and 73 respectively, while the *Amethyst* in the two actions had 112 casualties, including 8 officers.

And once on Lake Ontario
Defeated he his Yankee foe,
And at Niagara
Success was won by Captain Yeo.
And had our general, one Prevôst,
Been equal to his trust,
And Barclay been more fortunate.
On Erie's lake a happier fate
Had crowned the British arms.

XVI.

The *Seahorse*, in another clime,
With Stewart in command, what time
We warred against the Porte.
A frigate captured from the Turk.
When sanguinary was the work
Her cannon wrought on board,
For died well nigh two hundred men.
And wounded were as many when
The *Badere Saffer* struck.
Ferociously the foreign bark
Maintained the battle through the dark.
Till daylight lit the scene,
Than which no limner could depict
A ghastlier one, or war inflict
(So far as records go)
More carnage in so small a space
Than fell upon the human race
That day in the Levant.
The decks with dying Turks were strewed.
But those surviving, still imbued
With strong religious hate,
Refused to strike, though often hailed.
While round the ship the *Seahorse* sailed
And raked her fore and aft,

Until at length the Crescent fell,
 And rose St. George's Cross to tell
 Where lay the victory !
 They died not vainly, for their creed
 The doctrine taught the martyr's meed
 Of glory would be theirs,
 And as they passed from death to life,
 To every warrior from the strife
 A passport Allah gave
 To Paradise and all its joys,
 Now wholly purged from earth's alloys,
 With houris waiting there !

XVII.

Lord Cochrane's name can never die
 While valorous deeds a mastery
 O'er human hearts retain.
 When captain of the *Speedy*, brig.
 A Spanish ship of xebec rig,
 Named *Gamo*, boarded he,
 And slew and wounded fifty-four
 Out of three hundred men, or more
 Than all the *Speedy's* crew.
 The *Pallas* knew him next as chief,
 And Frenchmen would for foe as lief
 The devil have as he,
 For all the coast to far Bordeaux
 The little frigate harassed so
 That rest was there for none :
 And boarded he the *Tapageuse*
 With all the *Pallas* cutters' crews,
 And captured her with ease.
 And drove away three ships of war,
 Of which one Cochrane forced ashore
 And totally destroyed.

For Aix all sail his lordship set,
 Together with a small corvette,
 And stood into the Roads,
 Wherein a frigate and a fort,
 Although three brigs were in support.
 With boldness he assailed ;
 And soon the ship resolved to serve
 (Of forty guns, and named *Minerve*)
 As he'd the *Gamo* once,
 So " Hard-a-weather " was the word,
 And he the Frenchman ran on board.
 But with so great a shock
 The *Pallas* nigh became a wreck,
 And fell her topsail-yards on deck,
 When Seymour towed her off.
 But harder still was Cochrane's task,
 Accomplished in the Roads of Basque,
 The last he rendered us,
 Though Gambier offered little aid,
 And but for him it may be said
 That failure had ensued.
L'Impérieuse, a Thirty-eight,
 With *Pallas* (Cochrane's ship of late,
 And now by Seymour led)
 And *Unicorn*, were all the three
 Which hoisted sail in company,
 With fireships half a score
 The fourteen battle-ships to burn,
 Which lay in line, moored head and stern.
 With batteries in support.
 The *Mediator* Cochrane fired,
 And blowing up the boom, retired,
 And sent the fireships in,
 When panic seized upon the foe,
 And cutting cables, all the row
 Save two were soon aground :

When Cochrane Gambier asked for aid,
But he, too cautious or afraid,
Two ships would only send ;
And these he soon recalled, though Bligh,
The *Valiant's* captain, wished to try
And burn them where they lay.
Although deserted thus by each,
An effort Cochrane made to reach
The grounded battle-ships,
And managed three to set alight,
While all the others Gambier might
Have easily destroyed,
Had only he the zeal displayed
That Cochrane testified, or paid
Regard to his demands.
Yet gallantry we'd not deny
To one whose conduct gave the lie
To taunts of cowardice,
When England's line of battle he
In the *Defence* led valiantly
Upon the "First of June,"
But Gambier's fire was dulled by years,
And he was now inspired with fears
To over-caution due.
Napoleon called him "imbecile,"
And made his own commanders feel
The fury of his wrath
By shooting one, cashiering two,
And causing all the rest to rue
Their lack of enterprise.
Now Cochrane, by intrigues bereft
Of naval rank and honours, left
The land that gave him birth,
And helped the Spanish colonies
Their freedom win in tropic seas,
Far distant from his own.

And both by Chili and Brazil
 His lordship's name is honoured still
 As saviour of the State,
 And well the tyrant Spaniards know
 The man who struck the heaviest blow
 Against their hated rule.
 Oft he declared the men of France
 With British tars had little chance,
 Though numbering two to one ;
 While expectation would be vain
 To look for pluck in those of Spain,
 No matter what the odds ;
 And Cochrane his opinion backed.
 And proved the *dictum* was a fact
 In the Old World and the New.
 At length this stirring *Iliad* ends,
 And home his way Dundonald wends,
 His honour cleared, and so,
 Life's "Odyssey" of travel o'er,
 He journeys to the distant shore
 Whence pilgrims ne'er return ;
 And in the Abbey Cochrane lies,
 Where silence reigns, and warring cries
 Its aisles ne'er desecrate :*
 And those the echoing pavement tread
 And read the records of the dead,
 Within its precincts writ,
 Will find recorded on the stones
 And brasses 'bove our seamen's bones
 A country's history !

* Macaulay has finely described Westminster Abbey as "the temple of silence and reconciliation."

CANTO V.

LORD NELSON'S CAREER—In the Polar Regions and the East Indies—In command of the *Hinchinbrooke*, *Albemarle*, and *Boreas* in the West Indies—The *Agamemnon* in the Mediterranean—His services at Bastia and Calvi—Capture of a Spanish frigate—St. Vincent—How Nelson took two ships-of-the-line—The boat action at Cadiz—Teneriffe—The Nile—Nelson's "Band of Brothers"—Destruction of the *Orient*—Copenhagen—Nelson and Parker—His pursuit of Villeneuve to the West Indies—His final departure from Portsmouth—The morn of Trafalgar—Nelson's captains—The Battle—The *Victory* in action—The death wound—The final scene—The gale after the Battle—St. Paul's.

I.

HAIL ! matchless seamen, who our isle
 From French invasion rescued. While
 Survives an Englishman,
 Thy feats of glory on the Nile
 And Denmark's shore,—where mile on mile
 The ships and batteries lay,
 And rained the cannon-shot and shell
 As though the very fires of hell
 Were loosed upon the earth,—
 And on that memorable day
 When 'neath thy spells dissolved away
 The fleets of France and Spain,
 Will make thy magic name for aye
 The guiding star which marks the way
 That leads to victory !
 In Nelson skilfulness we find
 In just proportion was combined
 With pluck and prudence rare—

The last, without a dauntless breast
 To execute, will make the rest
 Of less than no account,
 While valour of the loftiest sort
 Will hopes of victory bring to naught
 If skill or judgment fail;
 But where the three united are
 Quite irresistible in war
 Will the possessor be.
 One eye he lost at Calvi's breach.
 An arm on Santa Cruz's beach
 When landing with his men,
 And blood he shed at Nile, and spared
 No whit his feeble health, or cared
 For aught but duty's call.
 And though to Nelson life was dear,
 When Victory whispered in his ear,
 Her guerdons in his hand,
 Then sacrificed he life as well,
 And bade the world a long farewell,
 And so he passed away!

II.

His first appearance on the stage,
 Where Nelson lived to be the rage—
 The Theatre of War,
 Was with his uncle, Suckling named,
 Who in his day was greatly famed.
 On board a Sixty-four.*

* The *Raisable* was named after one captured twelve years before (in 1758, the year that Nelson was born) by the *Dorsetshire*, Captain Dennis, after a desperate action in which she lost 160 men. This ship was lost four years later off Martinique.

Next in a trading ship we find
That Nelson sailed, resolved in mind
To quit the Royal fleet,
Like his commander, Rathbone (late
On board a frigate master's mate),
A skilful officer,
Who long ashore inactive pined,
Until, disgusted, he resigned
And joined a merchantman.
But Nelson was induced to stay,
And joined a battle-ship, which lay
At Chatham. *Triumph* called,
And made his talents manifest
As pilot on the Thames, a test
Of knowledge of his art.
With Phipps he served in Arctic Seas,
And helped to make discoveries
About Spitzbergen's shore,
And once alone essayed the skin
Of a great Polar bear to win,
Which o'er the ice he chased,
And when they asked how he could dare
To track the creature to its lair,
He artlessly replied :
" I much desired the hide to take
A present to my sire to make,
And could no danger see."
The boy was father to the man,
And eagerness to win outran
The fear that checked pursuit,
A sentiment to him unknown,
As he was frankly fain to own
When asking what it meant.
With Farmer in the *Seahorse* o'er
The Indian Ocean and the shore
Of Hindostan he sailed,

From Comorin to Bussorah, .
And Afric's shore from Zanzibar
To Babelmandeb Straits,—
By ancients named "The Gate of Tears."
As in the "Periplus" appears,
Which led to seas unknown.
His captain was the same who won
All England's praise for duty done
And life well sacrificed,
When he on board a "Thirty-two,"
Quebec by name, his pennant flew,
And fought the *Surveillante*,
Of forty guns and larger crew,
Till blowing up in action, few
Of all his men escaped.
The King a Baronetcy gave
The son of him who 'neath the wave
Had found a sepulchre,
And as for Nelson, Farmer's end
And early training much did tend
To mould his character,
And when he came to man's estate,
And met his old commander's fate
That day at Trâfalgâr,
He showed that duty was his guide,
And all else but as dross beside
When in the balance weighed.
On board the *Seahorse* there was one
'Tween whom and Nelson friendship sprung.
Young Troubridge, midshipman.
Who at St. Vincent's battle led,
While Nelson, when Cordova fled
To join his leeward ships,
Across his path the *Captain* threw
And of the Spaniards captured two,—
Of all which more anon.

In India Nelson served until
Three years had passed when, falling ill,
To England he returned,
And, thanks to Captain Pigot's care
(The *Dolphin's* chief) and native air,
Was soon restored to health

III.

As fourth lieutenant he appears
(Although in age but eighteen years)
On board a battle-ship,
The *Worcester*, Captain Robinson,
Who oft was heard to say that "none
Among his officers
Displayed such marked proficiency
And ardent zeal the first to be
When difficulties pressed."
Soon as the *Lowestoft's* second "luff"
Young Nelson showed the sterling stuff
Of which he was composed.
For when his senior failed to steer
A boat to board a privateer,
Which had been overhauled,
Permission he received to try,
And though the waves ran mountains high,
The duty was performed,
Which filled beholders with amaze
And won for him the Admiral's praise
And captain's epaulettes.
As Pitt, "the pilot at the helm,"
At three-and-twenty steered the realm,
So he, when but a score,*

* Nelson once made this comparison when his capacity to command a man-of-war, on account of his youth, was questioned.

Was captain of the *Hinchinbrooke*,
And landing with his seamen took
A Nicaraguan fort,
But Nelson, ever delicate,
Fell ill, and in a dying state
Cornwallis 'companied home,
Whose tender care, he said, did more
His health completely to restore
Than all the surgeon's drugs,
Which Nelson flung into the sea,
To which his quick recovery
He once attributed.
His eager soul was chained to earth
By feeble health, which from his birth
Pursued him to the grave,
And fragile was the mortal frame
In which beat high the quenchless flame
Of genius unsurpassed,
Whose fire the casket soon consumed.
The spirit freeing once illumed
Its tenement of clay.
The *Albemarle* and *Boreas* flew,
Both in the Old World and the New,
His pennant many years,
And on the North Seas' stormy wave
And in West India's seas he gave
Continued proofs of skill,
And thus experience of the climes
Of Polar regions, in the times
When rarely visited,
And of the Indies, East and West
(Of which he loved the latter best).
By Nelson was acquired.
When at Quebec a lady won
The dauntless heart subdued by none
Among the sterner sex,

And he resolved to quit the fleet
And find in some obscure retreat
Content and wedded bliss.
But Davidson (a friend in need
Was he) induced him to recede
From this unwise resolve,
And giving up the fair one's hand,
He promised to retain command
Of the *Albemarle* instead.
Like Antony, a woman's love
Was placed by Nelson far above
All else that earth affords,
As he at Naples testified,
And once again the hour he died,
When to his country's care
Bequeathing Lady Hamilton,
Whose image was the latest one
That occupied his thoughts.*
Affectionate and sensitive,
He was not made 'gainst love to strive,
And so an easy prey
He fell to her voluptuous charms,
And peace enjoyed within those arms
While war raged all around;
And thus his character displays
A mixture of heroic traits
With others of alloy,
Though 'tis this combination gives
Its special charm to one who lives
Supreme in English hearts.

* An unfinished letter to Lady Hamilton was found in Nelson's desk on board the *Victory* after his death, in which he confided her to the care of his King and country, who, however, neglected the solemn trust, and left her to die in penury.

When in the Leeward Islands, he
Enforced a strict legality—
Which Vankee traders sought
To contravene, and broke the law—
And seized their ships, in number four,
And held them all to bail.
Great odium Nelson thus incurred,
And summonses on him were served
For trial in the courts :
But spite of all he never swerved,
And though by some deserted, nerved
Himself to do the right,
And finally he won the day,
And through the islands had his way,
And thanks received from home.

IV.

When war ensued in 'Ninety-three,
And every battle-ship that we
Possessed was fitted out,
A Sixty-four, the least of these,
Named *Agamemnon*, on the seas
The hero's pennant bore,
And like the warrior-king who led
The Greeks at Troy, as Homer said,
Immortal glory won.
At Bastia, Nelson, under Hood,
Some batteries raised, in eager mood
That brooked of no delay,
And pushing on the siege, he forced
The French to yield the town, and crossed
To Calvi, in the West.
Where, disembarking heavy guns,
He dragged them up the hills, though tons
They weighed and roads were none.

And naught his iron will could shake,
But difficulties seemed to make
Him more resolved to win!
At Calvi's siege he lost an eye,
But natheless in the battery
Continued to the end,
His men directing day and night,
And of his sufferings making light,
Till ours the town became,
When all the Isle of Corsica
Submission made, and Nelson's star
Ascendant rose on high!
When Hotham had succeeded Hood,
From out Toulon a squadron stood
To drive his fleet away,
Although they fled when face to face.
But after three days' eager chase
At length were brought to bay,
When there ensued a partial fight,
And ere the French resumed their flight
Two battle-ships were his.
In Nelson Jervis quickly saw
The future hero of the war,
As Hood had recognised,
Promoting him to Commodore,
And brief the time elapsed before
The step was justified.
The prize, *Minerve*, his pennant broad*
Was privileged to hoist on board,
With Cockburn in command,
When hove two Spanish ships in sight.
And he, determining to fight,
With Preston of the *Blanche*,

* A Commodore's distinguishing flag is called a "broad pennant."

Engaged the larger of the pair
 (For he preferred the lion's share
 When fighting was afoot),
 And, capturing her, despatched a boat
 The Jack from spanker-peak to float,
 When suddenly appeared
 Two other sail, though, undismayed,
 He tackled one, and would have laid
 The *Minerve* close aboard,
 When showed another three in view,
 And Nelson 'gainst so many knew
 'Twas fruitless to contend.
 As for his prize, the forty hands,
 Her English crew, their chief's commands
 Obeyed devotedly ;
 But yielded up the ship at last.
 When fell her sole remaining mast
 Before the Spanish fire.

V.

Now to the *Captain* Nelson moved.
 And at St. Vincent's battle proved
 His aptitude for war ;
 When on the day St. Valentine
 For lovers claims, the Spanish line
 He boldly cut in half,
 And of four prizes two he gained.
 And long the heavy fire sustained
 Cordova brought to bear.
 A sudden thought the hero fired—
 Or rather genius 'twas inspired
 The quick resolve to act—
 And, "bearing up," he left the line,
 And disregarding Jervis' sign
 To follow in his wake,

Across the *Trinidad's* way
The *Captain* steered, resolved to stay
Her course at any risk.
This done, when Troubridge interposed,
The great *San Nicolas* he closed,
And, seeking her to win,
Resolved to be the first on board.
And, calling Berry, drew his sword
And led some seamen on.
The upper-quarter gallery
Inviting entrance seemed to be,
So into it he sprang,
And breaking through the cabin door,
Despatched the Spanish Commodore.
Who sought to bar his way,
And hurrying for'ard, gave the crew
No time to oppose his gallant few,
Who swept them from their path.
Now on the quarter-deck he stood,
Victorious there, though in no mood
To rest on laurels won.
But the *San Josef* boarding quick,
Repeated cleverly the trick
He had performed before.
The conduct of Britannia's sons
Dumbfounded all the Spanish Dons.
Who failed to comprehend
A warfare so unorthodox.
Where, 'stead of "long-bowls," blows and knocks
At arm's length were the rule,
Reminding one of Agincourt,
Where (Shakspeare says) Fluellyn sought
To justify to Gower,
"The true prerogatives and laws
From ancient times of all the wars,"
Which Harry set at naught.

Moreover, in this time of need
The Saints to prayers had paid no heed,
But suffered ships with names
Held sacred in all Popish lands,
To pass into schismatic hands

Without a miracle,
And 'twas, no doubt, most scandalous
Their namesakes should succumb to us,

And they not interfere,
Though all the Roman Calendar
Had been invoked for aid in war

Against these heretics !
" On the *Sun Josef's* deck," wrote he,
" The swords were handed o'er to me
Of all her officers,"—

A sheaf of many glittering blades,
Denoting all the Naval grades

That hold commissioned rank,
From Admiral Windthuyzen, who
His latest breath soon after drew,

Down to the junior " luff "—
And surely never such a scene
Has 'fore or since enacted been

As this three-decker showed,
When Nelson's coxswain, standing by,
(While all the Spaniards, with a sigh,

Delivered up their swords),
Received them from the Commodore,
And, thinking of his Nance ashore,

Each tucked beneath his arm !

VI.

An Admiral now, the *Theseus* bore
His flag, with Miller, as before.

The captain in command :

And Cadiz town and forts by night
Bombarded he, and set alight
The shipping in the port.
Nor should a deed remain unsung,
Which for our Nelson homage wrung
E'en from his enemies.
When reconnoitring in his barge,
The Spanish Commodore in charge
The Admiral attacked ;
And though but twelve were with him there.
'Gainst twenty-five, his only care
Was to engage the foe,
A wish his seamen fully shared,
For two to one were odds they dared
With surety of success.
A struggle sharp as short arose,
And thickly showered the cutlass blows
As falling autumn leaves :
And Nelson's coxswain, Sykes, his head
Once interposed, and thus instead
Of Nelson met the stroke,
And would this honest tar beside
His chief most cheerfully have died
To save one drop of blood !
At length his sword their leader gave,
The handful that remained to save,
To England's admiral,
For eighteen men were killed outright,
And all the others in the fight
Had grievous wounds received.

VII.

With Jervis Nelson laid his plans
To capture Santa Cruz, which stands
In Teneriffe's broad bay ;

And thus, where Blake increased his fame,
Endeavoured he to do the same,

Though heavier was the task.
A thousand men one July night
He disembarked, and strove with might

To carry all the works ;
But as he landed on the pier,
His arm a grapeshot shattered near

The elbow joint, on which
His stepson, Nisbet, bore him back.
And as at daylight the attack

Had failed at every point,
By Troubridge 'twas considered best
To come to terms to save the rest.

Who then were re-embarked.
We lost in slain and drowned seven score,
And wounded quite as many more,

And with three hundred men
To face eight thousand troops of Spain,
With powder damped by surf and rain

Beyond all further use,
No other way remained to save
The remnant who had 'scaped the wave

And then the deadly fire.
'Twas Nelson's only failure yet,
The first and last the hero met

Throughout his whole career :
But his audacity was great,
For he was given to underrate

A Spanish enemy,
And once, when chasing Villeneuve, told
The captains of his ships to hold

A Frenchman each at bay,
While he "the Dons" would singly fight,
And only when he took to flight

They also might retreat !

An incident I'd here recall
Which proves his greatness when of all
Save life alone bereft.
At Teneriffe his barge he stayed
When pulling back, and efforts made.
Though faint with loss of blood,
To save the *Fox's* drowning crew.
And with his only hand he drew
Some men into the boat,
Thus showing that he who knew no fear,
And singly chased the Polar bear,
Thought nothing of himself !

VIII.

His next exploit the greatest was,
And not alone was this because
Of the results achieved,
But for the genius then displayed,
And never will the laurels fade
The hero won that day,
For ne'er was victory so complete
Or as disastrous to a fleet
As Nelson's at the Nile !
The Gallic ships at Aboukir
The Egyptian shore were anchored near.
Some thirteen sail in all,
Thus numbering just the same as ours,
Though these were rated Seventy-fours.
While Brueys' reckoned three
Of eighty guns, and one which bore
No less than half as many more,
By name the *Orient*.
Their ships were moored in single file,
When Nelson, steering for the Nile,
His flags for battle showed,

And Brueys also on his side
With like alacrity replied.

And so the fight began.
A noble "band of brothers" were
(So Nelson said) the captains there

Who led his Seventy-fours,
For Saumarez was next the chief.
And Westcott, who, to England's grief,

Was slain, beside him lay ;
And there was Berry, of his ship.
And Darby, hailed by every lip

The hero of the day.
Who suffered most, the Admiral said :
And Foley, who the squadron led,

With Hood the next astern,
And Gould, "audacious" like his craft.
And Louis, following close abaft.

Though foremost there, be sure :
And he whose ship went fast aground.
Bold Troubridge, who the cannon's sound

Heard through the weary night,
But by an unpropitious fate
Could not in fight participate,

To every one's regret :
And Peyton, Hallowell, and Ball,
With Hardy, who saw Nelson fall

(Commanding then a brig),
And Miller, bravest of the brave.
Who found, alas ! an early grave

Within a year or so ;
And Thompson, good at need as he.
Who showed devoted gallantry

Soon after Aboukir—
Such was the sailor band unique,
Whose like elsewhere 'twere vain to seek,
One worthy of their chief.

IX.

The sun had set as Captains Hood
And Foley, boldly leading, stood
Within the hostile line,
While Nelson shaped his course outside,
And thus between two fires, the tide
Of battle 'gainst them turned.
Along the line the *Vanguard* passed,
But soon the flagship anchor cast
Beside the *Spartiate*,
And stubbornly maintained her post.
Though, raked by *l'Aquilon*, she lost
Above one hundred men,
Till Louis, in the *Minotaur*,
And Miller, of the *Theseus*, saw
His strait and aided him.
On which, dismasted, yielded one,
And then the other, later on,
Unto the *Minotaur*.
Again the hero shed his gore,
When wounded by a grape-shot o'er
His sole remaining eye,
Though he was destined to survive
And to the Gallic Navy give
Its final *coup de grace*.
But Darby's ship, *Bellerophon*,
Assumed the hardest task upon
This ever-glorious day,
For she the mighty *Orient* fought,
And dearly was the honour bought.
As some two hundred men
Lay dead and wounded on her deck,
And she, dismasted and a wreck,
Soon drifted on the flood.

And the *Majestic* lost the same.
But also won a deathless fame
 When, singly, she engaged
The heavier *Tonnant* through the night.
Till her commander fell in fight.
 Who'd glory gained with Howe.
The *Swiftsure* then her anchor cast
In Darby's place, and fierce and fast
 Had grown the cannonade.
And thickest darkness, like a veil,
From water-line to topmost sail.
 Enshrouded friend and foe.
When suddenly an incident
Occurred in battle's midst that sent
 A thrill throughout the fleet.

X.

The flagship *Orient* was on fire !
Fast spread the flames and, springing higher,
 The masts and sails enwrapped,
And then approached the magazine.
When, powerless to intervene,
 All the beholders there
Could but await the final scene.
(To launch a boat unable e'en,
 Or give a helping hand)
And closely watch with breathless awe
As skyward rose the ship-of-war,
 To myriad fragments blown !
Stilled was the sea and hushed the wind.
And perished all of human kind,
 Save seventy souls or so ;
And backward swept the waves from shore.
And ceased awhile the cannon's roar
 In the contending fleets ;

And rocked the ships upon the tide,
While all their seams re-opened wide
And started every plank,
And shook the timbers to the keel :
And all the masts from head to heel
Responded to the thrill,
And quivered to the Royal truck,
As might an oak by lightning struck.
And drooped the battle-flags ;
And even the framework felt the shock
As when sledge-hammers from the dock
The ships had first released !
A moment glowed the midnight sky
As the three-decker, soaring high,
Fast disappeared from view,
And in the quarters every face
Was clear as when the sunbeams chase
Each other o'er the grass,
But then great darkness fell on all
And shrouded, like a funeral pall.
The scene from human eye !
Terrific the report took place,
And followed for the briefest space
The silence of the grave,
Until a rain of falling spars
And bodies of the gallant tars
Descended on the sea !
But short the truce prevailed around.
And scarce had died away the sound,
When once again the guns
Were pealing forth in thunderous tones
A solemn Requiem o'er the bones
Of those just passed away !
As wounded to the death Brueys
Amid the scene of slaughter lay,
Said he to those around :

“ An Admiral of France should die
Upon his quarter-deck, and I
Will here await my end ; ”
And so he breathed his latest sigh
Before the great catastrophe
His flagship overwhelmed !
Their Commodore a boat of ours—
Which plied with others 'mid the showers
Of falling wreckage—saved,
Who, springing o'er the *Orient's* rail.
A refuge from the fire and hail
Of shot and timbers found.
'Twas Casabianca thus was saved,
And Southey sings how nobly braved
His son, a child of twelve,
The horrors of that scene of wreck.
As, standing on the burning deck.
His father he obeyed.
And pleasant 'tis to know that sire
And son escaped from death by fire
To meet on shore again.

XI.

Low sank the sun behind the wave
Ere Nelson to his captains gave
The signal to begin.
And barely had the daylight broke
Before dispersed the heavy smoke,
Which brooded o'er the fleet
And showed the ghastly sight below.
Replete with scenes of human woe
Beyond what tongue can tell !
Of thirteen sail, beneath the main
Were sunk or captured all but twain.
A record unsurpassed

By any battle of the sea,
And one which makes this victory
In naval war unique.
As though inspired, a single glance
Showed Nelson how the fleet of France
Might surest be attacked,
And reasoned he : " If they can swing,
Then I my ships can safely bring
On either side their line,
And so, betwixt two fires, I'll take
Them at their anchorage, and break
In pieces Brueys' power."
But skilfulness and daring, too,
Were necessary for the due
Performance of the task,
While genius, heaven's ethereal fire,
Alone could any breast inspire
With such a perfect plan.
But two of all that gallant fleet
Escaped from thence a fate to meet
In all respects the same.
For Nelson took near Malta's Isle,
Soon after he had left the Nile,
One named the *Généreux*,
When she was thither on the way,
And in the action died Perrée,
The Admiral in command :
And then a like ill-luck befell
A second ship, the *Guillaume Tell*,
Which sought to reach Toulon,
When Nelson's ship *Foudroyant* neared,
And Dixon in the *Lion* steered
Athwart the Frenchman's hawse,
Which, when two hundred men and all
Her masts had fallen, the Admiral
Gave up reluctantly.

XII.

The scene now shifts. A northern clime
Beheld the genius sublime
Of this "Great Little Man,"—
As he was termed in early days,
When the West Indies sang his praise
And safety owed to him,
And feared ill-doers his ire to raise,
But strove to mend their evil ways
Beneath his scrutiny.
The Baltic heard our Nelson's name,
And Denmark knew its master came
That ne'er forgotten day,
When Copenhagen felt his might,
And Prince and People in affright
Delivered up their fleet,
Whose crews were slaughtered in the fight,
While silenced were the forts ere night
By his resistless fire.
Thy battlements, O Elsinore !
On which had paced in days of yore
The shade of Hamlet's sire,
Now seemed as though with heavy frown
Regarding those who Denmark's crown
Would to dishonour bring,
While they, with ships in line arrayed,
The threatening forts o'erhead surveyed
Without a qualm of dread,
And showed their cannon, tier on tier,
With one who nothing knew of fear
To lead to victory.
Where stalked upon its lonely post
The murdered king's unshriven ghost
With mien majestic,

Were gathered now a motley host
Against the foe to guard the coast
Committed to their care,
And where in olden times were seen
The falconet and culverin
In mimicry of war,
The guns upon the rampart's height
Were pointed at the fleet in sight
Meandering far below !
Well were it then for Denmark's king
Had he, instead of hearkening
To foolish councillors,
His preparations caused to cease.
And speedily concluded peace
By meeting all demands ;
But trusted Prince and Populace
In their ability to face
Our Nelson and his fleet.
Yet great the difficulties were
Which Nelson by his patient care
And skill consummate met.
The channels leading to the town
Were full of shallows and unknown.
And lacked the depth to float
His ship *St. George*, a Ninety-eight,
So thence his flag he shifted late
Upon the battle's eve,
On board the *Elephant*, a small
And handy Seventy-four, like all
He chose for the attack.
A practised pilot from a boy,—
When all Thames reaches in a hoy
Of Suckling's ship he ranged,—
The shoals he sounded in the night,
Although from work and sickness quite
Unfitted for the task.

The skilfulness by him displayed
When at the Nile his course he laid
 Past reefs on either hand,
Or navigating at the Nore,
Again off Copenhagen's shore
 He showed conspicuously,
As piloting his flagship straight.
The *Elephant* escaped the fate
 By grounding others met.
All save our Nelson would have feared
The Danish monarch thus to beard
 With twelve small Seventy-fours,
And bombs and frigates but a few,
Which, in the *Amazon*, Riou
 Against the batteries led.
Three grounded on the "Middle Shoal,"
But Nelson reached the wished-for goal
 With all his other ships.
And then began a cannonade
Which threw all others in the shade.
 Since Rooke Gibraltar won.

XIII.

From ten to two the battle raged.
And all the batteries were engaged.
 Which mounted seventy guns,
And o'er six hundred more their fire
From block-ships poured, and slaughter dire
 On every side ensued.
Yet Nelson flinched not from the task.
But signalled Parker aid to ask
 For vessels to replace
Those fast aground, who sent him three.
But lightly blew the breeze from sea
 And they made little way :

When Parker hoisted the "recall,"
Which roused within his spirit all
 The anger slumbering there,
And raising to his blinded eye
The telescope in mockery,
 To Foley he exclaimed,
"The *London's* flags I fail to spy,"
And swore no ship of his should fly
 The order to retreat.
"For action keep my signals fast,
And nail the colours to the mast,
 That's how I answer such!"—
The Admiral said, for as he spoke
In bitterness of soul, awoke
 The memories of the past,
And glory gained upon the Nile,
And he resolved to battle while
 A ship remained afloat!
Heroic Nelson! none but he
Had dared to strive successfully
 'Gainst orders such as these,
And made proud Denmark lowly bow,
And those concerned compelled to know
 His will must be obeyed,
And yielded up the fleet to him,
From battle-ships to all that swim
 The seas and carry guns,
And that, said he, without delay.
Or he would soon in ashes lay
 The Danish capital!
Severe the loss the British fleet
Experienced ere the Prince would treat
 With Nelson for a peace,
And some twelve hundred seamen bled,
While 'mong those numbered with the dead
 Two captains should be named—

He, of the *Monarch*, gallant Mosse,
And one, of whose untimely loss
 He wrote in his despatch,
That much he mourned "the good Riou."
Who by a shot was cut in two
 On board the *Amazon*.
And now in this eventful life,
Replete with honour, wounds and strife,
 We reach the fitting end,
Which quite unique in glory was
As well as loss to England's cause.
 For none of all her sons
Could she less spare than this, who now
The martyr's wreath upon his brow
 With victory's bays entwined!

XIV.

When Villeneuve's fleet with one from Spain
To the West Indies steered,—in vain
 Thus hoping to decoy
Lord Nelson from the British seas,
So that Napoleon could with ease
 Our country's shores invade,—
With but ten ships he crowded sail,
Eighteen intending to assail
 Where'er they might be met,
But thence returned on Villeneuve's track.
(Who with his squadron doubled back
 To take us unawares),
And thus Napoleon's cherished scheme
Of conquering England, long his dream.
 He finally dispelled.
Two years had passed and something more
Since Nelson last set foot on shore,
 When he arrived at home.

There to enjoy a brief repose*
Untroubled by his country's foes,
When Villeneuve at Ferroll
Disturbed the hero's well-earned rest.
But 'stead of steering north to Brest,
To Cadiz made his way,
Where Collingwood then held command,
Who, when he saw him make for land,
The swift *Euryalus*
Despatched to England with the news.
And Blackwood ordered haste to use
In seeking out his friend.
Off Portsmouth moored, in greatest haste
He posted thence, no time to waste,
To Merton, Nelson's home,
Who quickly Blackwood's news divined,
And adding, "I've made up my mind
To fight the allied fleet,"
He hurried up to town that day,
Before the Government to lay
His plans for meeting them.
When asked his battle-ships to name
And captains choose, he said: "The same
Fine spirit all pervades,"
Nor would he fresh commanders take
Or any change consent to make
In Collingwood's command.
And well his trust the fleet repaid,
And never once could it be said
The Navy failed its chief,
For 'twas not duty that alone,
But love as well, inspired each one
To follow him to death!

* Lord Nelson had not once landed from the *Victory* between the 10th June, 1803, and the 20th July, 1805, when she anchored off Portsmouth.

St. Vincent, Howe, and Camperdown
Could from their crews obedience own
And win their confidence,
But their affections Nelson gained
In measure such as none attained
Before his time or since.

XV.

Three weeks had Nelson been ashore,
When once again the *Victory* bore
His flag at foremast head ;
And when from Portsmouth he embarked
His last departure thence was marked
By moving incidents,
And ne'er was witnessed such a scene
As when the hero passed between
The crowds that lined the way,
None there but knew the fragile form,
In battle maimed and seamed by storm
In king and country's cause.
That empty sleeve recalled the grief
All England felt at Teneriffe,
And for the blinded eye
And crimson scar upon the brow,
They told of Calvi's siege and how
He conquered at the Nile,
While for the frame, with sickness bent,
It showed how genius Nelson lent
A strength beyond his own !
The veteran sailors and the young
Were foremost in the eager throng
To touch his garment's hem,
And in the face beloved to glance,
Which terror struck to all in France
And presaged victory !

Some had with Howe and Rodney fought
When they the French to action brought
And crushed them utterly :
And other seamen, still more aged,
Had sailed when Anson war had waged
In both the Hemispheres,
Or, under Hawke, had served on board
When Conflans and l'Etendeur warred
With him for ocean's sway ;
Or fought against La Clue and bled
When off Gibraltar Boscawen led
And all his fleet dispersed ;
Or Watson saw on Plassey's field,
Or Saunders when the French to yield
Quebec to Wolfe were fain,
Or Pocock off Havannah's lines,
Or Cornish in the Philippines.
And Keppel nearer home.
The women brought their children down,
And all the people of the town
The hero flocked to see ;
And some there were shed silent tears.
Or gave expression to their fears
That he would ne'er return,
While others wrung his lordship's hand
As silently he stepped from land
Into the *Victory's* barge,
Or blessings prayed upon his head
And triumph presaged when he led
The expectant British fleet.
The hero, deeply touched, exclaimed
(For time was short and duty claimed
Him urgently afloat) :—
“ I knew before I had their cheers,
But now, oh, Blackwood ! it appears
I have their hearts as well ! ”

And then with sadness Nelson dwelt
On the presentiment he felt
That death was close at hand,
And so he quitted England's shore.
To which returned he never more,
Except to claim a grave !

XVI.

Our tars with rapture hailed the sun
As cloudlessly it broke upon
The morn of Tråfalgår,
As might fire-worshippers before
The rising orb, who kneel to adore
The God of Light and Life !
How joyfully they viewed askance
The fleets combined of Spain and France
In serried line extend,
Sea-serpent like, a goodly row,
From port to starboard on each bow,
As far as eye could see ;
And confidence inspired each breast
To capture some and sink the rest
Of three-and-thirty ships,
Beneath whose bulky hulls the deep
Now groaned as might in troubled sleep
A Titan bound by Jove !
But seven-and-twenty sail had we,
And yet to fight the enemy
Sought all with eagerness :
And sounds of merriment and song
The quarters filled as sped along
The fleet with stun'sails set,
For England's Admiral, loved the best
Of all obeying her behest,
In the old *Victory* led.

An omen of assured success,
As was the leader's name no less,
To every seaman there.
And fair were all the ships to view,
Their forms reflected in the blue
Expanse of tranquil sea ;
And when the breezes died away,
Before the noontide sun its ray
Had shed upon the scene.
On royal-masts the sails were spread
The passing zephyrs overhead
To woo in close embrace.
Below, the guns in rows project
Their muzzles o'er the ocean, flecked
With sunshine and with shade :
And though now silent they appear.
The time is quickly drawing near
When all will find a voice,
And speak to listening ears of death
With each discharge of sulphurous breath
From out their iron throats,
And, belching fire and clouds of smoke,
Defiance roar with every stroke
Against Britannia's foes !
And they their guns with courage manned,
But wholly failed to make a stand
Against our greater skill,
Though all were to their duty true.
And fought and died as though they grew
Fast rooted to the deck !
Deceptive were the halcyon seas,
Unruffled by the gentle breeze
Which barely filled the sails,
Inviting careless ease and rest,
And hiding 'neath their sleeping breast
The storm so soon to break.

As Samson, by Delilah's charms
Enamoured, slumbered in her arms,
From thoughts of danger free,
While nigh approached the Philistine,
To whom his mistress gave the sign
To bind him where he lay,
When shorn of strength and flowing locks,
No one of all his foes but mocks
The chosen of the Lord—
So Amphitrite would fain beguile
With soft caresses and a smile
Each hardy mariner,
Who shook the temptress from his side,
And nerved himself to meet the tide
Of fast approaching war !
Delusive was the syren's strain,
And soon the cannon told how vain
Were their imaginings,
And 'mid the wreck and deadly fire
The scene was changed by human ire
As though to blackest hell !
So man's contentions know no bounds,
And there exists no sea the sounds
Of strife has failed to hear.
Like him I've named, who, bound and blind,
In death involved all human-kind,
So England's champion now,
For whom had struck the final hour,
When perishing, o'erthrew the power
Of France and Spain combined.
A single deed remained undone,
And incomplete without this one,
Said Nelson, all would be.
A signal would he hoist abaft,
His last command and wish to waft
To all on board the fleet.

And thus the famous message ran :
" England expects that every man
His duty will perform."
Not in the teeming page of time
Are words recorded more sublime
To warriors said than these,
And when their purport every crew
Assembled at the quarters knew,
Electric was the effect,
And round on round of loud hurrahs,
With " three times three," the excited tars
Repeated o'er and o'er,
And rang the timbers with acclaim
And frantic shouts of Nelson's name,
Beloved as none before !
As faintly this October morn
The sounds to foreign ears were borne
Upon the gentle breeze,
The portent told of coming doom
In battle, or a watery tomb
In the succeeding storm,
And of resolve the foe to teach
That for the chief, so loved by each,
A victory they'd achieve.

XVII.

Of Nelson's captains, heroes all !
Who were resolved at duty's call
To follow him to death,
But two had witnessed Aboukir
One, Berry, who was standing near
When he received his wound,
And Hardy, of the brig *Mutine*,
Who, on the *Victory's* deck was seen
As Captain of the Fleet.

But Harvey, of the *Téméraire*,
Was unsurpassed by any there,
And followed in his wake
Fremantle, of the *Neptune*, who
Was one of Nelson's favourite few.
And closing up astern
Were Bayntun, Digby, Codrington,
While Mansfield and Laforey on
The rear were with Pellew.
The weather line Lord Nelson led,
And Collingwood was at the head
Of that upon the lee.
Whose flagship lost the most in slain
(Save Harvey's and Lord Nelson's twain)
Of all the British fleet.
No need to speak of one all know,
Who struck that day the opening blow,
And gained his chief's applause;
And well did Hargood second him,
Whose ship, *Belleisle*, could scarcely swim
And lay dismasted there;
And he who had the *Mars*, bold Duff,—
Who, like his namesake, "Hold. enough,"
In battle scorned to cry—
And Cooke of the *Bellerophon*,
Who perished ere the day was done
Each on his quarter-deck.
The *Tonnant's* captain, Tyler named,
For skill in his profession famed,
And the *Colossus* chief,
As Morris known, were wounded both,
But yet to go below were loth
Until the fight was o'er.
And Moorsom equally sustained
The fame the old *Revenge* had gained
In 'Lizabethan times.

And freely blood in battle shed,
As did the gallant King, who led
The *Achille*, prize to Howe.
Thus all the spirit showed of Blake,
So light of wounds and death to make
When Nelson led them on !

XVIII.

The *Royal Sovereign* showed the way
Where thickest seemed the foe to lay,
And as the line she led,
To Rotherham cried Collingwood :
" To be in action here what would
Lord Nelson gladly give ! "
And like of mind the Admirals proved.
For Nelson, marking how he moved
Ahead of all, exclaimed :
" See how that noble fellow steers
Where densest Villeneuve's line appears.
As ever is his wont ! "
And so it was, without a doubt,
That Collingwood, with guns run out
And matches ready lit,
Made for the *Santa Anna*, now
Upon the *Royal Sovereign's* bow,
And passed so close astern
As nearly from the peak to tear
The Spanish colours floating there :
And, " luffing " up, he brought
On her to bear his every gun,
And soon Alava forced to run
And quit the fighting line,
When all her masts being shot away,
And not a rope-yarn left, or stay,
He struck the Spanish flag.

Thus leading Nelson's leeward wing,
 The *Royal Sovereign* like a king
 Throughout the fight behaved,
 And seven-and-forty men were slain,
 And twice that number bled, while main
 And mizen-masts were gone.
 And suffered the *Belleisle* no less,
 As sinking nigh and in distress,
 With foes on every side,
 Still high aloft her battle flag,
 All riven by shot, an honoured rag !
 She flew defiantly,
 For though bereft of spar and mast,
 They lashed the British ensign fast
 Upon a boarding pike !
 But Redmill, coming up, was seen
 To thrust the *Polyphemus* 'tween
 The *Neptune* * and *Belleisle*,
 And the *Defiance* intervened
 And Hargood's ship from *l'Aigle* screened.
 While stood our *Neptune* 'twixt
L'Achille and her, and as they neared,
 The *Belleisle's* crew her seamen cheered,
 Who heartily replied.

NIX.

Duff, in the *Mars*, was next in line.
 And well obeyed the battle sign
 To "close the enemy,"
 For though four vessels tackled him,
 His ship remained in fighting trim
 And drove a couple off.

* At Trafalgar there were engaged three *Neptunes*, two *Achilles* (one captured by Howe on the first of June) and two *Swiftsures*, that of France, which had fought at the Nile under Hallowell's command, being a prize to a French Squadron.

Who found the attack without avail,
When both the others, setting sail.

Left the unconquered *Mars*;
On board of which one hundred bled,
Including Duff among the dead.

Killed by a cannon-shot,
Which carried off the hero's head
Just at the moment victory shed

Its halo round his brow!
The *Tonnant* raked *Monarca* aft
And quickly forced the Spanish craft
To drop astern and strike.

When Tyler, "porting hard" his helm
The *Algeciras* to o'erwhelm,

The Frenchman ran on board
And forced to lower the Tricolour,
While aiding Duff against the four

Which had attacked the *Mars*.
He lost his topmasts everyone,
Which with the mainyard masked each gun

Upon her upper deck.
When tried the Frenchmen, desperate grown,
To make the English ship their own.

Though vain was the attempt:
But when the *Juan* struck to him,
No boat the *Tonnant* had could swim

(So shattered were they all)
To take the Seventy-four in charge.
And so the *Dreadnought* sent her barge

To hoist the Union Jack.
What foe such seamen could resist.
Who captured ships "hand over fist,"

As they themselves would say.
For whether these from Gallia hailed.
Or from Iberia's harbours sailed.

'Twas all the same to them!

XX.

No ship at Trâfalgar arrayed
 Her part more admirably played
 Than the *Bellerophon*,
 Which gallant Cooke to battle brought,
 Whose namesake, when he took the *Forte*,
 Like him in battle fell.
 Each side there lay an enemy,
 While from a distance other three
 The "*Billy Ruffian*" mauled,
 (The name her tars their ship had given)
 Whose prototype was headlong driven
 To earth from highest heaven,
 When on the winged horse, Pegasus.
 He strove (as Homer sings to us)
 To join the gods above.
 Well worthy she herself now showed
 To make Olympus her abode,
 If valour could avail,
 For when below her topmasts fell,
 And flames upon the poop as well
 Burst forth with suddenness,
 Unconquered still, although a wreck,
 With guns capsized on every deck,
 She battled to the end!
 'Mong ships whose deeds to mind I call
 Was one whose loss was most of all
 (*Colossus* named was she),
 For some two hundred bled or died,
 And helplessly upon the tide
 She rolled a derelict,
 Till Berry took the ship in tow,
 When Captain Morris went below
 Though wounded long before.

Three Seventy-fours around her roved,
 But she, like baited bull, unmoved,
 Encountered each attack,
 Till France's *Swiftsure* struck, and one,
Bahama named, ere day was done,
 Her prize as well became.
 Our own *Achille* the *Argonaute*,
 And then her Gallic namesake, fought
 Until they edged away,
 And when upon her starboard side
 The *Berwick* * took her post, and tried,
 With Gascon hardihood.
 The British Seventy-four to board,
 Her crew repelled the swarming horde
 And made the ship their own.
 Space fails to tell in full detail
 How nobly fought two British sail,
 Defiance and *Revenge* ;
 And Grenville would with grim delight
 Have watched the fortunes of the fight
 Could he have witnessed how
 The new *Revenge* of Nelson's day
 Upon the Spaniards brought to play
 Her guns resistlessly.
 And took, as was indeed but meet,
 Revenge upon a Spanish fleet
 In payment of old scores.
 When Durham in *Defiance* dashed
 'Tween *l'Aigle* and *Belleisle*, he lashed
 Her bowsprit to his mast,
 But, boarding, met so fierce a hail
 Of bullets from the fo'c'sle rail
 And crowded tops and waist,

* The *Berwick*, retaken this day by our *Achille*, had been captured by a French fleet off Corsica ten years before. Among other British battle-ships retaken during the war were the *Northumberland* (in Howe's victory) and the *Alexander* in Bridport's action.

That he was quickly driven back,
And recommenced his gun attack
Until the *Aigle* struck,
Though, as when fighting 'gainst the Dane,
The old *Defiance* lost in slain
And wounded seventy men.

XXI.

The weather line the *Victory* led,
And, ere that day was ended, shed
An immortality
Upon her name and Admiral.
Both mightiest held to be of all
That ever sailed the sea ;
And bearing down with stun'-sails set
On Villeneuve's line of battle, met
Its concentrated fire.
Though she discharged no shot the while.
But silently for o'er a mile
Continued on her course.
As for his bridal gaily decked
No whit the danger Nelson recked,
But in full uniform,
With Orders on his breast displayed,
Upon the quarter-deck he stayed
Exposed to heavy fire.
Alas ! the hero had for bride
No lovely woman by his side,
Life's weal and woe to share,
But death in grisly shape instead
To Hymen's altar Nelson led.
From him to part no more.
And in the tomb the marriage bed
In readiness for him was spread
To crown the nuptial rites !

Not only shot, but musket balls
From all the tops and wooden walls
And quarter galleries
Were rained upon the narrow space
Which he bestrode with even pace,
With Hardy by his side,
As though he stepped along the aisle
And all good wishes with a smile
Received from kindly friends.
The ships lay clustered thick in front,
And hence, in bearing down, the brunt
Of battle fell upon
The three "first-rates" in "line ahead,"
Which gallantly the squadron led,
And thus the gauntlet ran;
Though no return made any there.
But on the *Victory*, *Téméraire*
And *Neptune* slowly stood!
"Which ship, my Lord, shall I attack?"
Asked Hardy, though of these no lack
There seemed from which to choose.
"I care not," Nelson said, "so take
Your choice, and every effort make
To quickly close their line."
On stood the ship, and noon had passed
Ere found the *Victory's* guns at last
The voice so long denied,
And spoke in tones of import dire
As plunged through Villeneuve's ship the fire
From stern-post to the stem!
When o'er the din her broadside pealed,
The *Bucentaure* right over heeled
Three timber streaks or more,
As though fast driven upon a rock,
Or stricken by an earthquake shock
Or sudden hurricane,

And as a forest giant bends
Before the blast until it ends,
 So she beneath that hail—
For treble-shotted was each gun.
And terrible the havoc done
 Within half-pistol range !
Four hundred seamen prostrate lay,
And twenty guns capsized, they say,
 Under the *Victory's* fire,
Which suddenly, in luffing round
The Gallic flagship's taffrail, found
 An enemy beyond.
Redoubtable by name was she,
And so the ship was found to be
 To England's cost that day,
And Villeneuve said had others done
As well as Lucas, he had won
 A certain victory.
Her seamen and the *Victory's* fought
With guns so close in every port
 That some among the crews,
Who in audacity were matched,
The rammers and the sponges snatched
 From out each other's hands :
While men with buckets filled stood by,
And after each discharge let fly
 The water on the sills,
Which otherwise with fire had blazed.
And such a conflagration raised
 As happened at the Nile.

XXII.

Lord Nelson 'mid the deafening din,
Still paced the deck, nor would within
 The poop protection seek :

Although from all the tops o'erhead
Their marksmen poured a shower of lead
 With an unerring aim.
At length, as raged the fire around,
A musket ball its billet found
 Within that dauntless breast,
And Nelson sank upon the spot
Where died his secretary, Scott,
 But some few minutes passed,
When Hardy—turning sharply round,
Attracted by the groan and sound
 Of falling on the deck—
Exclaimed, "My Lord, art wounded thou?"
Though as he marked the pallid brow,
 Too well he knew the truth!
"Yes, Hardy, they have done for me,
And I am wounded mortally,"
 The hero feebly gasped,
Who then was carried down below,
Where leaving him awhile, I'll show
 The progress of the fight,
And only add, 'twas found the ball
Had lodged beside the spine, and all
 The surgeon's skill was vain!

XXIII.

Meanwhile "the fighting *Téméraire*,"
As Harvey's ship was called, her share
 Of blows and glory won;
And first the *Neptune* she attacked.
But, standing on, her topsails backed,
 And the *Redoubtable*
Upon the starboard side assailed,
Till Harvey she for quarter hailed,
 Who reckoned her his prize,

Though she was by the *Victory* won,
 Whose fire had greatest havoc done ; *
 And sad it is to say
 That, lacking masts to carry sail,
 She foundered in the heavy gale
 Which followed Tråfalgår.
 The *Téméraire* now steered athwart
 The French *Fougueux*, whose rigging caught
 Her bower anchor's fluke,
 To which 'twas lashed by Harvey, who
 On board some thirty seamen threw,
 And captured her as well.
 Our *Neptune* stood in line the third,
 And by her size quite undeterred,
 The *Trinidad* fought
 Till she Fremantle's prize became,
 Which should be noted as the same
 That on St. Vincent's day
 Had been engaged, eight years before.
 By Nelson, then a commodore,
 But managed to escape.
 The next in line, *Leviathan*.
 The *Neptune* following closely, ran
 Beside the *Bucentaure*,
 Which struck to Bayntun, who, again.
 Now singling out a ship of Spain.
 The *San Augustin* named,
 On her a heavy broadside poured.
 And then a party sent on board
 To lower the Spanish flag.
 Nor sought the *Africa* to shun
 The *Intrepide*, though gun for gun
 So greatly overmatched

* Of the *Redoubtable's* crew of 643 officers and men, 300 were killed and 222 wounded in the action ; and, sad to say, the gallant survivors were drowned in the succeeding gale.

That Digby's ship was hard beset
 Till Codrington arrived, though yet
 The Frenchman battled on
 Until her masts were shot away,
 When *l'Intrepide* at close of day
 To the *Orion* struck.
 Some special mention should be made
 Of other Seventy-fours which played
 A part at Trâfalgâr,
 As once before at Aboukîr,
 Where Nelson's name a sound of fear
 To Frenchmen's ears became.
 These were *Defence* and *Minotaur*,
 And *Spartiate*—the Tricolour
 Which showed till forced to strike
 Beneath the *Theseus'* fire to port,
 And that to starboard Nelson brought
 From his ship *Vanguard's* guns—
 And *Swiftsure*, which had borne erstwhile
 The flag of England at the Nile
 With Hallowell in charge,
 But to a Gallic squadron struck,
 Though now again a change of luck
 The ship restored to us.

XXIV.

When borne by stalwart arms below
 The hero, lest his men should know
 The nature of his wound,
 Had spread his kerchief o'er his face
 That none the lineaments might trace,
 Familiar and beloved.
 A sight, he feared, would damp their hopes.
 Then marking how the tiller ropes
 Below were shot away,

He ordered new ones to be rove,
Thus showing how his thoughts above
The pains that racked him soared,
And death itself, though drawing nigh,
No whit could shake his constancy.
Or quench his high resolve!
When in the cockpit laid at length,
The flow of blood and failing strength
Dismayed those present there,
And when the surgeon probed the wound,
That it was mortal soon he found,
And told his lordship so.
"I knew it, Beattie, from the first."
Said he, and then, consumed by thirst,
For water called, and air,
When they administered relief,
And Beattie fanned the dying chief,
Who raved deliriously,
Or in a swoon quiescent lay,
While ebb'd the stream of life away
And swiftly neared the end.
Yet, though each nerve was racked with pain,
He called for Hardy, though in vain,
To learn how went the fight,
But when an hour or so had passed
The *Victory's* captain came at last,
To whom thus Nelson spoke :—
"How goes the day? I trust that none
Of England's fleet have struck, or done
Their share of duty ill!"
"No fear of such a thing," said he,
"And every ship has equally
Your signal well obeyed.
A dozen sail are yours, my lord,
And ready to receive the word
You may be pleased to give."

His mind relieved by what he'd learned.

His thoughts upon himself were turned.

And Nelson whispered low :—

“ I am a dying man, and fast

Am sinking. Soon will all be past,

Oh, Hardy, for your friend ! ”

Then Hardy, speechless, wrung his hand.

And, quitting him, resumed command

Upon the quarter-deck.

XXV.

Meanwhile the battle raged o'erhead.

And fell the wounded and the dead

As thick as autumn leaves.

While through the ship the seamen's cheers

Re-echoed loud, and reached the ears

Of the expiring chief,

Whose *requiem* was the cannon's tones.

Which with the crashing shot and groans

Reverberated there !

At length were stilled the sounds of strife.

And where the tumult had been rife

A solemn stillness reigned,

Until the ships of Dumanoir

Upon the *Victory* from afar

Began a cannonade ;

And when her guns replied, the sound

Great anguish Nelson caused, as round

On round the cockpit shook,

Till presently assistance came,

When fainter soon the fire became

Until it died away.

Those guns that stunned his dying ears

Shall echo down the coming years

As long as England lasts,

And Tráfalgår will ever be
Her proudest naval victory,
And he her greatest son !
The brave old ship, the action won.
Was silent now, and almost run
Were Nelson's sands of life.
And Hardy when he came again.
Nigh senseless found him with the pain
So long his frame had racked.
" Some eighteen sail, or maybe more.
Your lordship has as prize of war."
He told the admiral,
" And their disposal they await.
Submissive to the will of fate,
As given by your decree."
But he was past all earthly cares.
And for the coming future theirs
A mightier power controlled :
Though still, amid the mists of death,
The sufferer with his latest breath,
Displayed his wonted fire !
" Tis well," he sighed, " although a score
Of allied ships I bargained for,
But I'm content with less."
When asked if Collingwood the line
Should lead, and he command resign.
The admiral replied :—
" No, Hardy, never while I live
Shall I to any person give
The conduct of the fleet : "
And then to his flag captain said
In solemn tones, and raised his head
To emphasize his words,
" Now hear me, and my orders mark
That you should anchor ere 'tis dark
Within Cape Tráfalgår."

Had Collingwood his prudence shared.
Then had the shattered fleets been spared
Disaster from the storm,
For even with Nelson's words, at hand
The tempest gathered o'er the land,
Betokening coming doom,
And rising wind of shipwreck spoke
Ere heaven's artillery awoke
The echoes barely stilled !
Now fast approached the hour supreme,
When would be o'er life's troubled dream
And rest at length be his !
One favour yet remained, but one,
To ask of him who knelt alone
Beside the hero's bed,
And faltered he in accents low.
" Oh, kiss me, Hardy, ere I go ! "
Who tenderly complied.
As when the drowning wretch a straw
Will seize to save him from the maw
Of the devouring sea.
So, shivering on the very brink
Of death's forbidding stream, this link
That bound him yet to life.
The dying Nelson grasped, and fain
Would fondly clutch the golden chain
Of human sympathy !
So Nelson bid his friend farewell,
And he, whose feelings none can tell,
Ascended to the deck,
And soon the soul, which knew no thought
That savoured of the baser sort,
Or through a stirring life
Was ever known to harbour fears,
He yielded up as on his ears
The shouts of triumph rang.

One Burke received his latest sigh
And heard the hero's last " Good-bye,"
Ere dying in his arms ;*
And when they learned the fatal news,
No man was there of all the crews
But shed a sorrowing tear ;
And may we in our utmost need
An admiral find as brave in deed
And skilled in strategy !

XXVI.

And now the tempest Nelson feared
The scene of recent conflict neared,
And struck the shattered fleet.
Beneath the warlike panoply
Of these Leviathans the sea
Had groaned, as though distressed,
But scarcely was the battle o'er,
When vengefully the neighbouring shore
It littered with their bones !
But few among the captured sail
Were in condition to prevail
Against its fierce attack,
As many were dismayed quite,
While most were in such sorry plight
They scarce could keep afloat,
And only four to Plymouth port
Were finally in safety brought—
The spoils of Trafalgar !

* The following inscription on a tombstone in Wouldham Church-yard, near Rochester, shows that Nelson expired in this officer's arms :
" To the memory of Walter Burke, Esquire, of this parish, who died twelfth September 1815, in the seventieth year of his age. He was Purser of H.M.S. *Victory*, in the glorious battle of Trafalgar, and in his arms the immortal Nelson died."

What scenes occurred unseen by eye
As rose unheard to Heaven the cry
Of drowning mariners !
Of flagships in the battle ta'en
(The *Bucentaure* and three of Spain)
But one escaped the storm ;
And the *Redoutable* went down,
Although the valour she had shown
Deserved a better fate ;
And perished in her company
The *Trinidad*, long at sea
The Spanish's Navy's pride ;
And many more were sunk or burnt,
While foundered others, so 'twas learnt
From fragments washed ashore ;*
And thus is reckoned up the tale
Of prizes which the furious gale
Ere daylight swallowed up !
In every case the British crew,
Who manned them, perished, save a few
Picked up by passing boats,
And, struggling vainly, all the rest
In the Atlantic's seething yeast
Of waters disappeared !
Before ensanguined was the tide.
And mangled corpses far and wide
The news of battle spread,
But now bestrewed was all the coast
With wreckage from the vessels lost,
And bodies of the drowned.

* Of the prizes the *Algeciras*, *Santa Anna* and *Neptuno* were retaken : the *Monarca*, *Fougueux*, *Berwick*, *Aigle*, and *San Francisco d'Asis* were wrecked ; while by Collingwood's orders the *Intrepide* and *San Augustin* were burnt and the *Argonauta* scuttled. In most instances, all hands, in addition to the prize-crew of fifty officers and men, were drowned.

Some allied ships, in number five,
 From Cadiz Harbour sailed to strive
 The prizes to retake ;
 But though a pair recaptured they,
 And one we lost the previous day,
 Our men being overpowered,
L'Indomptable was lost of these.
 When perished in the raging seas
 Above nine hundred men,—
 Some saved from its devouring maw
 When Villeneuve's flagship, *Bucentaure*.
 Had foundered previously,—
 And when the Spanish *Rayo* all
 Her masts had lost, the *Donegal*
 The great three-decker took,
 Though she upon the coast was dashed.
 When bodies were in hundreds washed
 Ashore her fate to tell !
 Thus worked its cruel will the sea.
 With cannon-shot and musketry,
 Upon ten thousand men,
 Who death had faced in double shape
 By fire and tempest off thy Cape,
 Oh ! fateful Tråfalgår !
 And now the warring winds were hushed,
 And hostile fleets no longer rushed
 To meet in battle's shock ;
 But as the Galilean Lake
 Was silenced when the Saviour spake,
 So now the sea was stilled,
 And when the sun arose at dawn,
 And shone upon the scene forlorn,
 Unruffled lay the deep,
 A mirror as of burnished glass,
 Although its treacherous depths, alas !
 A fleet had just engulfed.

XXVII.

I've ended now the stirring tale
Of him whom Englishmen bewail,
 Though proudly, as of one
Who had fulfilled in life the rôle
Predestined his, and won the goal
 And grasped the victor's prize.
When in the hollow of his hand
Napoleon held the subject land
 From Cadiz to the Pruth,
And earth's enslaver sought to be
No less the master of the sea,
 The tyrant had to count
With one who on the watery way
As much retained unchallenged sway
 As he upon the land.
The Emperor's schemes to counteract,
His fleets he everywhere attacked
 And harbours closely blocked,
And with success his plans he met,
And bounds to his ambition set
 And saved his native isle !
When Villeneuve steered for Cadiz Bay,
Instead of Brest, where Ganteaume lay,
 And foiled the cherished dream
On which his master's mind was bent—
To make a quick, combined descent
 Upon our southern coast.
Then Nelson proved that he alone,
Until the days of Wellington,
 Could thwart his strategy. *

* Though Trafalgar gave the *coup-de-grace* to Napoleon's scheme of invasion, it was in August, two months before, that the Emperor, on hearing that Villeneuve had sailed for Cadiz instead of Brest, broke up the "Grand Army of England" and began the march for the Rhine, which ended at Austerlitz.

With eloquence has Southey said,
When writing of the warrior dead
 And his heroic end,
"His passage to his last abode
Resembled that Elijah trod,"
 As told in Holy Writ :
And well the fiery chariot may,
With horses fashioned not of clay,
 Have stood in readiness
To bear within the Golden Gate
The mighty mariner who late
 Had vanquished France and Spain !

XXVIII.

From cottage as from house and hall,
From Windsor's storied keep through all
 The land the people mourned,
And though he captured nineteen sail,
The loss thought only to bewail
 Of England's favourite son,
And stateliest of all funerals
Was that they gave him in St. Paul's
 Beneath the cross of gold.
Forth rolled the muffled drums without,
And pealed the organ's notes about
 The lofty dome and aisles,
And paced the long procession slow
The marble floor, where to and fro
 For centuries unborn
The feet of men may come and go,
As ebb eternally and flow
 The tides upon the shore.
And now are said the words we know,
Which tell of man's decay below
 And flesh resolved to dust,

And speak of resurrection too,
And hopes which sempiternal grow
 Within the human breast ;
And as the " Dead March " shook the walls
The vast assembly in St. Paul's
 The hero left alone,
And Nelson found unbroken rest
Until the fane received as guest
 The lord of Waterloo,
And side by side these warriors lie,
Who each achieved a victory
 None ever yet surpassed.
The Princes of the Royal Blood
Around Lord Nelson's coffin stood,
 And greater still than they,
Both Pitt and Fox together paid
Their tribute to the patriot laid
 Within those sacred walls,
And as the crowd of mourners near
The altar drew, around the bier
 Was seen the *Victory's* crew.
Each one with him had served on board,
And ere they left, with one accord
 The sorrow-stricken band
The colours seized the coffin bore,
And into many fragments tore
 This token of the dead !
It was the flag the *Victory* flew,
And well its folds each mourner knew,
 By war and weather worn,
And kept a piece, bedewed with tears,
In memory of the proudest years
 That ever seamen had !
Of Nelson's character with truth
It may be said that from his youth
 His duty was his guide,

And while self-seeking was unknown,
His patriotism with years had grown
And strengthened with his strength;
And he was quite of Howard's mind—
To be to sailors' failings blind,
Provided, that's to say,
No enemies they feared a jot
When rattled round their heads the shot
And rained the musket-balls.
No love had he for politics,
In which he never sought to mix,—
Agreeing thus with Blake,
That "all a seaman's energies
And every power that in him lies
Should be at England's call"—
And "ne'er a sailor cost a tear,"
As he could say when death was near
With no less truth than Rooke.
With him from Nile to Tràfalgàr
Unbroken flowed the tide of war
With victory on its crest,
And may the stream in ages far
Still bear aloft the British tar
To triumphs as complete!
No monument his deeds demand,
Though many have throughout the land
To Nelson's fame been raised;
But deep in England's heart he dwells,
Which ever with emotion swells
At mention of his name,
And when her race of glory's run,
Than him she'll claim no worthier son
Among the quick or dead!

CANTO VI.

SOME English Navigators—Byron's Voyages—Cook's Discoveries,
—Vancouver—Arctic Exploration—Davis, Hudson, and Baffin—
Our Modern Arctic Officers—The Fate of Franklin—The Navy
and the Slave Trade—Ships lost by Fire or Wreck:—*Regent*,
Association, *Eagle* and *Romney*, *Sussex*, *Resolution*, *Victory*,
Namur, *Ramillies*, *Blenheim*, *Anson*, *Newcastle* and *Sunder-*
land, *Thunderer*, *Cato*, *London*, *Ajax*, *Edgar*, *Prince*, *Boyne*,
Bombay, *Resistance*, *Amphion*, *Queen Charlotte*, *Courageux*,
St. George, *Hero* and *Defence*, *Minotaur*, *Agamemnon*, *Captain*,
Atalanta, *Orpheus* and *Eurydice*, *Victoria*—An oft-told Tale of
Storm and Wreck.

I.

'Tis said that smiling Peace can boast,
No less than horrid war, a host
Of conquests hardly won,
And more to be desired are these
Than all the brilliant victories
On land and sea achieved.
Among the winners of the bays,
Whose deeds command unstinted praise
In this my brief review,
Stands Cook pre-eminently grand,
The chief of that immortal band
Who mapped the watery main,
Though much to Drake is justly due
As being the first from England who
The Ocean voyaged round.
Most famous were the Portuguese
As pioneers of Eastern seas
From Europe to Japan,

Who first in Africa each bight
And inlet searched till, catching sight
Of Diaz' "Cape of Storms,"
(As he had named what now we call
"Good Hope") they northward steered, and all
The continent surveyed!
No bay or gulf but they explored,
And greater honour than the sword
Has ever won was theirs,
As fearlessly past point and bluff
These seamen stood, and no rebuff
Would take or danger fear,
But threading every winding cove,
Its course and limits sought to prove
Throughout its whole extent,
And duly entered in the chart
Results by the surveyor's art
With patient skill achieved.
Examining each nook and Sound,
These navigators headed round
The Cape they called Natal,
(Because 'twas seen on Christmas Day)
On which they landed Mass to say
And plant a wooden cross.
Thus probing estuary and creek,
At length they sighted Mozambique,
And pushing boldly on,
Passed Pemba Isle and Zanzibar,
Which with Mombasa harbour are
Now under English rule,
And sighted Jibbel Shumshum's peak.
Which mariners descry who seek
For Aden's sheltered port.
Was not a channel or a shoal
But with a line or sounding-pole
They fathomed to its depths,

And stayed not till they'd reached the goal
And traced the coast-line of the whole
Of Afric's continent.
Thence to the Persian Gulf they sailed,
And o'er the Arab tribes prevailed
And founded Ormuz State,
Whose wealth and greatness to rehearse
Was Milton's task in stately verse,
Though soon its glories fled
When India's navy to the ground
The fortress razed, and now a mound
The site alone denotes !
Though Diaz off the Cape was drowned.
Da Gama lived on Asia's ground
To win a deathless name,
When Calicut, in Malabar,
The strangers welcomed from afar,
Who'd crossed the angry seas ;
And Gama landed at Cochin,
Thus first the route discovering
To India by the Cape.
But though a century had passed
Before our ships an anchor cast
In harbours now we own,
The Portuguese the pride of place
Soon yielded to the mightier race
Now ruling Hindostan ;
And in their wake our seamen have
Discoveries made, to which they gave
Their Anglo-Saxon names,
As Wallis, Cook, and Carteret,—
Who seas where sail was never set
First ploughed with venturous keel,
And isles explored untraversed yet,
Whose diverse races first they met
And sought to civilise,—

And Dampier, half a buccaneer,
With Flinders, to Australians dear,
Who all their coasts surveyed.

II.

On board the *Wager* sloop, with Cheape,
As midgy Byron sailed the deep.

Which constant tempests swept,
While hardships, want and mutiny,
Their footsteps dogged as from the sea

They refuge found on land,
When that unlucky ship, with sails
From bolt-ropes torn in furious gales

Was driven on Chili's coast,
And not till many years had fled
And he was numbered with the dead,

Did Byron home return.
When he became a commodore
Many a distant tropic shore

Was he the first to sight,
And sailed the seas of half the world,
And Britain's Union Jack unfurled

Where ne'er 'twas shown before.
Promoted, Admiral Byron fought
De Guichen off Grenada's port,

In the West India Isles ;
And thus was his a famous name
Before all hearts were set aflame

By his great namesake's verse,
Wherein he wrote of his "grand-dad"
(Who little liking ever had

For any of his craft)
With such a flippancy of style
As would have roused the veteran's bile
'Gainst him and all his books.

Of Cadiz he'd no nearer view
(Nor aught of Spanish ladies knew,
Of whom his grandson raved),
Than from the masthead of his ship.
When on a close blockading trip
He led a British fleet,
And jeered at Dons and all their ways.
As did our seamen since the days
Of Drake and Frobisher.

III.

Cook foremost stands among the souls
Whom niggard Nature only doles
At distant intervals.
Indomitable, skilful, brave,
Repose he scorned while any wave
Yet unexplored remained.
And projects useful to mankind
Revolved in his capacious mind,
With vast experience stored,
And voyaged thrice, nor would he wait
Save further plans to formulate
Fresh triumphs to assure.
He sighted first the Sandwich Isles.
And surveyed many hundred miles
Of this and other groups ;
And 'twas among his proudest boasts
To have explored New Zealand's coasts,
And Otaheite's too,
And Caledonia brought to light.
And all Australia's shores for quite
Eight hundred nautic leagues.
Each spot he named, from Botany Bay
To where his ship *Endeavour* lay
Long stranded on the reef ;

And Captain Cook his life laid down
 In science cause, more sacred grown
 By this great sacrifice ;
 And in the Sandwich Islands found
 The grave which makes them hallowed ground
 To Englishmen for aye.
 These beauteous isles, which first he trod,
 Have worshipped long the Christian's God.
 Though then idolatrous ;
 And homes of plenty and of peace
 Now flourish where, without surcease,
 Reigned violence and crime,
 And cannibals performed their rites,
 And endless sanguinary fights
 The land made desolate.
 Vancouver, who had sailed with Cook,
 His rôle of navigator took,
 And steering in his wake,
 For nigh five years from Ninety-one,
 The Western coast explored alone
 Of North America,
 And now his name an island bears,
 And he with Cook the honour shares
 Of giving England lands,
 For which a future is in store,
 And for our fleets in time of war
 A port and *point d'appui*.

IV.

The first to die in the Arctic Sea
 Was gallant Sir Hugh Willoughby,
 On Lapland's frozen shore ;
 While Davis gave the Straits his name,
 And Baffin, as renowned, his fame
 Established by his bay ;

But celebrated more than these
Was Hudson, called "the Northern Seas'
Columbus" in his day ;
Though fearful was his latter end,
And there was wanting naught to lend
Its horrors to the scene.
Ill-feeling rose among his crew,
Until to mutiny it grew
'Gainst his authority ;
When, foodless, in an open boat
They sent him with his son afloat,
And half a dozen men.
Without a compass even to guide
The fragile bark upon the wide
And trackless Arctic Sea ;
And not again by mortal eye
Were seen that luckless company,
Who drifted to their doom.
For Baffin, in a distant clime
He lost his life (though for all time
Remembered by his bay),
But not of age or slow disease,
But fighting 'gainst the Portuguese
Within the Persian Gulf,
Where stout old Baffin perished while
He piloted off Ormuz Isle
The East India Company's fleet.
By Cook and Ross was done the most
In making known the Antarctic coast,
Where few succeeded them ;
While in the Northern Polar seas
Each year saw fresh discoveries
By British seamen made,
Though others took a minor part
In penetrating to its heart
The home of ice and snow.

Great *kudos* was by Parry gained,
Who until Markham's day attained
 The highest latitude,
And not by Baffin's Bay alone.
But by Spitzbergen's route he won
 The pride of place from all,
And "Parry's farthest" was the spot
Past which no navigator got
 For half a century.
To follow him (although the track
Was always not the same) no lack
 Was there of volunteers,
As Beechey, Collinson, and Ross,
With Crozier and Fitzjames, whose loss
 The country long deplored,
And Kellett, Osborn, Pim, and Back,
And so, like Banquo's line, to crack
 Of doom the line extends.
By Davis' Straits or Behring's Sea
Our seamen pressed on eagerly
 The glory to attain
Of being foremost at the Pole.
Which has for ages been the goal
 The world has striven to reach,
And credit still McClintock shares
With Markham, Inglefield, and Nares.
 As Arctic veterans.
The honours of the barren quest,
With all its thrilling perils, rest
 On these and others whom
No difficulties held aback
To penetrate the icy pack
 Where thickest it congealed.
And Nature with unceasing toil
Of this great secret to despoil
 In her last hiding place.

Who can the Polar horrors tell,
Or all the sufferings that befell
The crews while struggling on,
Till, paralysed with numbing cold,
Their lives the remnant dearly sold,
Like soldiers in the breach,
To beard the Ice King in his realm.
Where neither steam, nor sail, nor helm
Avails to reach his throne !

V.

Two seamen independently
The North-west Passage made by sea
From different starting points,
But though the honours friends may claim
For both Maclure and Franklin, fame
Conceded it to him
Who, knowing not the task was solved,
The problem ere he died devolved
On shipmates who survived.
As sad as glorious is the page
That tells what this explorer, sage
Beyond all others, wrought,
Who fifty years in England's cause,
From Copenhagen to the shores
Of far Tasmania, served,
And met an ending tragical
When life he gave at duty's call
Within the frozen North.
Though little know we of the days,
His last on earth, and Franklin's praise
In truth would needless be.
From that sad hour was lost to view
The *Erebus* and *Terror's* crew,
With Crozier and FitzJames,

And other officers as true,
Whose bones these solitudes bestrew,
 Ungarnered but bewept!
Not e'en the wandering Eskimo
The resting-place may ever know
 Of that devoted band,
Who yielded up their latest breath
To forge this missing link, though Death
 Was not oblivion,
But of a verity became
The portal of undying fame
 For Franklin and his men.*

VI.

Some recognition here is due
Of those intrepid seamen who
 Have laboured in the cause
Of giving freedom to the slave,
By seizing on the tropic wave
 The ship that brought him o'er.
The "West Coast," called the "White Man's
 Grave,"
Saw thousands die who came to save
 These children of the sun,
While on the East—where deadly blows
The desert wind and Arab dhows
 To distant markets bore
From Zanzibar their human freight—
Each negro rescued from his fate
 Was dearly bought, indeed!

* It is written on the monument in Waterloo-place to the memory of Sir John Franklin and the crews of the *Erebus* and *Terror*, that they "forged this last link," the discovery of the North-West Passage, with their lives.

The slave who clambered on the deck
The shackles cast from off his neck
And stood for ever freed,
And woe to him who sought to drag
The fugitive from 'neath the flag
That waved above his head,
But oh ! the cost in noble lives,
And women turned to widowed wives,
And children fatherless !
A tale more thrilling ne'er was told
Since first at sea the Viking bold
His bark launched fearlessly,
And courage nigh without compare.
And sacrifice of self as rare.
The British crews displayed,
Though not promotion or applause,
With lavish bounty showered on war's
More favoured sons, was theirs !

VII.

It grim Bellona thousands slew,
Old Neptune had his victims too,
More numerous than they,
For times there were of piping peace,
While never did the storm-fiend cease
His ransom to exact,
And rarely passed a year of old
Without its roll of losses told,
On coast or open sea.
Impartial history here demands
That we should honour yield all hands
Of that unnumbered host,
Who died in seas tempestuous
Or perished in the flames, and thus
Our liberty assured

As much as those who 'gainst the foe
In battle fell, that England so
Inviolat might remain.
Some lost their lives in British seas.
Where 'midst the storm their native breeze
Brought faintly to the ear
The distant sound of village bells,
Which to the wanderer's fancy tells
Of childhood's memories.
And so they came at length to die
In sight of home, with faces nigh
Of those most dearly loved,
And, washed ashore, their bodies sleep,
Untroubled by the restless deep,
The village church beside!
Less happy, some—unseen by eye,
Unhelped by human sympathy,
Deserted e'en by Heaven,
(Or so it seemed)—have raised on high
In foreign climes, a piteous cry
For aid where none could come.
And perished where no sound of chimes
Could speak to them of happier times
In accents well beloved.

VIII.

Among the earliest ships of fame
Which England lost by sea or flame.
The *Regent* should be named,
Which, in the days of "bluff King Hal,"
With Knevit's flag as admiral,
The French *Cordelier* fought.
The fortunes of the battle swayed
In changing mood, when Knevit laid
The *Regent* by the foe,

And threw on board a chosen band,
Who were encountered hand to hand
By mariners as brave ;
And fiercely grappling in the fight,
Of death itself they made so light
That little heed was paid
To that fell enemy, the fire,
Which, spreading every minute higher,
Both ships involved aloft.
The lifts were soon alight, and stays,
While every sail was set ablaze
On foremast, mizen, and main,
Up to the royals, over all,
Above which, like a funeral pall,
The smoke hung heavily.
The pennant, streaming from the truck,
The flag, from spanker-peak ne'er struck
To foe of earthly mould,
Flamed comet-like, and from each spar
The fiery tongues extended far
Right to the bowsprit cap,
And all the rigging was enwrapt,
While thirstily the demon lapt
The streams of molten tar
From shrouds and ratlines, where aloft
Their flight the nimble topmen oft
Would take in rivalry.
The masts, which towered with supple grace,
Now tottered to their very base
And bowed their lofty crests,
And well alight were tack and brace,
Whose network, delicate as lace,
Stood out against the sky,
And flared the sails like burning scrolls,
As lurched the ship with heavy rolls
To starboard and to port.

Now caught the pinnacle, and the beams
Which bore it on the deck, the seams
 Of which began to part,
And hissed the pitch between each plank
Until the *Regent's* timbers shrank
 And splintered with the heat !
At length, all hope of safety passed.
It but remained to meet the last,
 The inevitable hour ;
But still, as shot the flames on high
And lit with fitful glow the sky
 And all that rock-bound coast,
With fury fought the crews below,
Of aught oblivious save the foe
 And how to win the day,
And with their cheers the echoes roused,
Like wassailers who had caroused
 Until the break of dawn.
On every hand was certain death !
Within, the powder's stifling breath,
 Above, the raging fire,
And rolled the treacherous sea beneath,
Each proffering all the martyr's wreath
 Who for their country die,
While like a canopy o'erhead
The death-shade of the guns was spread
 And blotted out the sky !
Oh God ! was ever such a scene
Of fire and slaughter witnessed 'tween
 The decks of ship-of-war,
As that which met the hurried glance
Of England's tars and those of France
 Still battling desperately,
Like gladiators doomed to die
Beneath a Roman Cæsar's eye
 To grace a holiday !

A crash resounded o'er the din !
Now stayed was every hand within
Those peopled wooden walls,
And silence fell as death profound
On those who heard the dreaded sound
Of that catastrophe,
And brooded o'er the neighbouring shore.
Like that great darkness felt of yore
In Pharaoh's stricken land ;
Though this was lasting as the grave,
For nothing broke the stillness save
The splash of falling spars,
And rose no longer sounds of strife,
While all who drew the breath of life
That instant ceased to exist !
But England mourned her heroes long,
Whose death in legend and in song
Is cherished evermore.

IX.

When nigh two centuries had fled
The sea engulfed two thousand dead
And four fine ships-of-war,
Which foundered off the Scilly Isles
When distant but a hundred miles
From whither they were bound.
The flag of Shovel carried one,
Which at Toulon had bravely done,
Association named,
And three there were of smaller size—
The *Eagle*, famed for victories
Achieved when under Leake,
Which at La Hogue his pennant bore,
And carried Rooke next day when four
Of Tourville's vessels struck,

And *Romney*, celebrated made
By Captain Coney, who was said
Among our best to rank,
Which with the *Firebrand* made the three
Were lost in Shovel's company
That wild October night.
A dozen years before this date,
The *Sussex* met a similar fate
Off the Gibraltar coast,
When died six hundred men in all.
With Wheeler, knight and admiral,
Whose flag was borne on board.
Yet greater loss the land sustained
Ere this occurred, or Shovel gained
A grave at Westminster.
When in the Downs were cast away
Some thirteen ships-of-war, that lay
In false security,
And fifteen hundred men were drowned,
Among whom was Beaumont's body found,
The admiral in command.
Four *Resolutions* England's fleet
Has either lost in battle's heat
Or by the tempest's power.
Upon the deck of one was seen
To fall that gallant veteran, Deane,
Slain by a cannon-shot
Beside his friend and shipmate, Monk.*
Who twenty Dutchmen took and sunk,
By Tromp off Dover led;
But she was off the Foreland burnt
That glorious day when Ruyter learnt
A lesson ne'er forgot.

* This battle, in which the *Resolution* carried Monk's flag, took place on the 2nd and 3rd June, 1653. On the 25th July, 1665, she was burnt in Monk's great victory, when De Ruyter lost twenty ships and 7,000 men.

Then Mordaunt, Peterborough's son,
Destroyed by fire another one,
 To save her from the French ;
While yet a third, the flag which bore
Of Admiral Norris, drove ashore
 Near Barcelona town,
An end befell a fourth at Aix,
Whose name the memory awakes
 Of Hawke's great victory.
But still a *Resolution* bears
The flag of England high, and dares
 All comers to the strife,
As when with Blake the fleet she led,
And for "close action" signals spread
 When hove the Dutch in sight.
When disappeared from human ken*
The *Victory*, with a thousand men.
 One night off Alderney,
All England mourned her gallant sons,
Whose *requiem* was the boom of guns,
 That sounded fitfully
Above the fury of the gale,
Which listeners told the dismal tale
 Of sorrow on the sea.
But all their pleadings were in vain,
For when upon the watery plain
 Arose the sun at dawn,
No boat was seen, or floating plank,
The spot to indicate where sank
 Our noblest battle-ship !

* The *Victory*, 110, carried no less than 1100 officers and men, including fifty young cadets, sent on board to receive instruction in their profession from Sir John Balchen, and was lost, with every soul, on the night of the 7th October, 1744, off the coast of Alderney.

Amongst the drowned that fatal night
Was Balchen, Admiral of the White,
A seaman thought to be,
Though in his six-and-seventieth year.
In skilfulness without a peer,
In services unmatched,
And now in triumph homeward bound
From Portugal, the cruising ground
Of our blockading fleet.
Off Pondicherry, tempest-tossed,
Three British men-of-war were lost
With every soul on board.
Though long the *Namur*, Seventy-four,
(Which Boscawen's flag as admiral bore),
The *Pembroke*, sixty guns,
And sloop *Apollo*, strove in vain
To struggle 'gainst the hurricane
Which swept the Indian seas.
Again the ship his flag which flew,
The same disastrous ending knew
The *Namur* had befallen,
Though Boscawen, lucky as before.
Had been by signal called ashore
Ere sailed the *Ramillies*.

X.

Returning from her cruising-ground.
The ship, when nearing Plymouth Sound,
Was stricken by a gale,
And loomed the Bolt-head on the lee.
And soon all hands could easily
The breakers' roar discern,
When sail was set off land to "claw."**
For they in this manœuvre saw
Their solitary hope!

* To "claw" is to beat to windward off a lee-shore

All anxious glances upward cast
On sea and sky, and then the vast
And threatening headland near,
For there was safety past those rocks ;
But yet the hopes the storm-fiend mocks
Of these poor mariners,
Who watch the surges wildly break
Or forward dash as though to make
The land itself their prey !
The ship now nears the beetling mass,
But soon 'twas manifest, alas !
To those who watched the scene,
That hopes to weather it were vain
And never more in port again
Her anchor would be cast !
Each rope was tautened with the strain,
And all the stays 'tween fore and main
And mizen-masts were stretched
Beyond their full capacity,
The brave old battle-ship to free
From her impending fate ;
And topsail yards were sharply braced,
And whip-like bent the masts as raced
The ship to reach the goal ;
While flattened was each sheet and tack,
That nothing men could do might lack
To save the *Ramillies*.
As in a race a noble horse
The bridle strains, while o'er the course
He flies at topmost speed,
And, feeling in his foaming side
The pricking of the spur, his stride
Increases *ventre à terre*,
Until he nears the winning-post.
Where will be either won or lost
The honour and the stakes—

So now, one effort more and saved
Will be a ship which long has braved
The battle and the breeze !
Alas ! that moment ne'er arrives,
Though, like the fiery steed, she strives
Her best to round the cape,
To which yet closer draws she now.
Till backward dash upon the bow
The billows from its base ;
And so o'ershadows her the crag,
That droop the folds of England's flag,
Still flying from the peak,
And fall the topsails flat aback,
Resulting from a passing lack
Of pressure by the wind ;
Although deceptive is the lull,
And soon again the groaning hull
Is battling with the gale,
And blown away are all the sails :
And, finally, the storm prevails
And sinks the *Rumillies* !

XI.

Her name misfortune signifies
(Like others which to memory rise)
In battle and in storm,
For she had borne the flag of Byng,
Who off Port Mahon had failed to bring
The enemy to bay :
And though her namesake deeply drank
With Rodney victory's cup, she sank
Upon the voyage back,
And with her to the bottom went
Many another, homeward sent.
While two were cast ashore.

The *Blenheim* met an end the same,
And she—which Spain and France o'ercame,
 With Duncan in command,
When Howe Gibraltar gave relief,
And fought with Jervis—came to grief
 Against a mightier foe.
Inscrutable are Fate's decrees !
Not battle, but the boisterous seas,
 Whose surges oft she'd met,
When four-and-twenty years were passed,
The *Blenheim* overwhelmed at last,
 Unseen by any eye !
She foundered off Mauritius' coast,
With Troubridge, long the Navy's boast
 And Nelson's earliest friend,
Whose son on board the *Harrier* sloop
Escaped the gale which swallowed up
 His father's Seventy-four,
Although than her less fortunate,
The *Java* shared the *Blenheim's* fate
 On that tempestuous night.
The *Anson* on the cape was driven
Which once the *Ramillies* had striven
 Without success to round,
When Lidiard died, a seaman who
Among our frigate captains knew
 But few that equalled him.
The noble ship was fast embayed,
And nigh upon her beam-ends laid
 Beneath the press of sail
While staggering forward on her way,
For hope of safety only lay
 In weathering the point,
Near which the other's bones were strown,
And where the *Anson* left her own
 To bleach for many years.

West Indian seas no less disclose
A list of losses long as those
The Indian Ocean claims.
The ships *Newcastle*, *Sunderland*—
Which Pocock thrice off India's strand
In action had arrayed
Against the fleet of Count D'Aché—
Both foundered on the self-same day
Upon the open sea,
And other three ashore were cast,
And many more lost every mast
Ere ceased the hurricane.
Again when twenty years had fled
Great was the sacrifice of dead
The greedy sea engulfed,
When sank the *Thunderer*. Seventy-four,
Which captured twenty years before
L'*Achille* of equal force :
And of our frigates foundered five,
Of whom no soul was left alive
To tell the woeful tale ;
And scarce a ship of all the fleet
Was fit an enemy to meet
So greatly were they mauled.
The *Cato* sailed in Eighty-two
From Portsmouth for the East—a new
And well-found “ Fifty-eight ”—
With Parker, holding admiral's rank,
Who lately on the Dogger Bank
Had battled with the Dutch,
And erst off Martinique Sir Hyde
Had fought de Guichen by the side
Of Rodney and of Hood ;
But from the day the *Cato* steered
From Rio port. no heart was cheered
With any news of her !

No need is there to celebrate
The *Royal George's* tragic fate,
Which was immortalised
By Cowper in sonorous verse,
Whose periods young and old rehearse
With quickening of the pulse.

XII.

Many a time, alas ! a tall
And stately ship has weathered all
The storms of Tropic seas,
A prey to fire at length to fall,
An end the stoutest might appal
Who other deaths have faced.
Deep down within the powder store
Destruction lurks in men-of-war,
Although in case of fire
They're loth to drown the magazine.
For should an enemy be seen
Defenceless would they be.
The *London*, lying at the Nore,
Two hundred years ago or more,
With Lawson's flag aloft,
This fate o'ertook with heavy loss.
And off the shores of Tenedos
The *Ajax* met the same :
While earlier, in the reign of Anne.
The *Devonshire*, with every man,
Save two, she had on board,
And Walker's flagship, *Edgar* named,
Which furiously off Portsmouth flamed,
Were both by fire destroyed.
Her anchor from the depths was drawn,
And may be seen, with water worn
And rust of many years,

The sole remains of what had been
 The oldest ship when Anne was Queen
 Of any in the fleet ;
 And also from the *Mary Rose*,
 Which foundered fighting England's foes
 In the eighth Henry's reign,
 A gun was off St. Helen's weighed,
 Where for three hundred years it laid
 Forgotten in the sea.*
 As battle-ships and cruisers these—
 The *Edgar*, *Blenheim*, *Ramillies*,
 And *Resolution*—now
 In storm and sunshine sail the seas
 And brave the battle and the breeze
 As boldly as of yore,
 And every heart will raise the prayer
 That none of them the fate may share
 Their namesakes once had known.
 Twice did a *Prince* to fire succumb.
 The only foe could overcome
 One of her Royal name—
 The first by Ayscue on the sands,
 Where, as she lay aground, all hands
 Forsook the burning ship ;
 And one of ninety guns, which flew
 The flag of Broderick when La Clue
 From Boscawen met defeat,
 Caught fire when in a heavy sea,
 And great was the fatality
 Among the hapless crew.
 The *Boyne* blew up (a Ninety-eight,
 In the West Indies flagship late
 Of Jervis) at Spithead.

* The anchor of the *Edgar* and the gun from the *Mary Rose* may be seen in the Museum of the Royal United Service Institution.

As did the *Bombay*, Eighty-four,
 Off distant Monte Video's shore
 Some thirty years ago.
 Then the *Resistance* disappeared,
 As she Malacca harbour neared,
 Somewhat mysteriously.
 And was no rigging found, or yard,
 But only some few fragments, charred
 Beyond identity.
 The *Amphion*, too, off Portsmouth quay
 Was blown to pieces suddenly,
 When quick as thought Pellew—
 Lord Exmouth's brother, he who saw,
 When captain of the *Conqueror*,
 The day of Tràfalgàr—
 From out his cabin window sprang.
 Just as the first explosion rang,
 Into the flowing tide ;
 But scarce another man survived,
 Though many others headlong dived
 From gun and bridle ports.

XIII.

Yet heavier was the loss accrued
 When the *Queen Charlotte* ocean strewed
 With bodies of the dead—
 The same which on the "First of June"
 Taught "Rule Britannia's" stirring tune
 To French Republicans—
 And died of those her decks who trod
 Six hundred men with Captain Todd
 And thirty officers—
 A veritable holocaust
 Unto the fiery Moloch tossed,
 As though his wrath to appease !

The Seventy-four *Bellona's* crew
 Off Lisbon took the *Courageux*,
 With valour unsurpassed ;
 But now the prize of victory
 Was snatched by the avenging sea
 From Faulknor's countrymen,
 And cast upon the Spanish strand.
 Where hundreds died who sought to land.
 Security to find.
 But yet more sanguinary far,
 With losses heavier than the war
 In any action caused,
 Was the disaster that befell
 Three famous battle-ships, whose knell
 Was sounded in the night,
 When on the stormy Jutland Coast
 They were with every seaman lost.
 About two thousand men !
 One called *St. George*, which flew of yore
 Lord Nelson's colours at the fore
 When Copenhagen fell,
 Was carrying Reynolds' at the mizen,
 When by the furious tempest driven
 Upon the rock-bound shore.
 A *George* (without the prefix " Saint,"
 Which bore of Popery the taint
 In Puritanic eyes)
 At Teneriffe had shown to Spain
 That forts no more could Blake restrain
 Than ships to wreak his will,
 And in her died the admiral,
 The greatest, take him all in all,
 Save one, the world has known.
 In the last battle of the war
 The flag of Admiral Spragge she bore.
 Who when he was compelled

His colours from the *Prince* to shift,
To her removed, till she adrift
Was sent a mastless wreck.
And 'twas while pulling in a boat
To board a ship which still could float,
That Spragge, whose only care
Was how the action to renew,
Was by a round-shot cut in two
And never more was seen.
Again, in fight off Southwold Bay,
When England nearly lost the day,
Her captain, Pearce, was slain,
Together with five others, who
Before they fell made Holland rue
The hour her fleet attacked.
Companions to her watery tomb,
Whose seamen shared the fearful doom
That Reynolds overtook.
Were two, the *Hero*—she who'd borne
The heat of battle under Strachan
And then in Calder's fight—
And the *Defence*, which saw the Nile,
And led by Hope in glorious style,
Took part in Trâfalgâr.

XIV.

Three other ships were doomed to meet
An end with horror as replete
As that these vessels met—
Their names, *Invincible* and *Fork*,
The first of which did yeoman's work
Off Ushant's Cape with Howe ;
And *Minotaur*, a ship of mark,
Which grounded on the sands of Haak,
On Holland's stormy coast,

When of her crew four hundred died,
 And with the wreckage far and wide
 Was littered all the shore.
 By Turner's art the scene's portrayed,
 And vividly his canvas made
 The incidents revive,
 As derelict and heeling o'er
 The once victorious *Minotaur*
 A dismal wreck appears,
 While galiots and fisher boats,
 And spars or anything that floats,
 Her drowning sailors seized !*
 A great career of martial strife
 Was closed without the loss of life,
 When off La Plata's shore,
 The *Agamemnon* met her end,
 With Berry in command, the friend
 And comrade formerly
 Of Nelson in this very ship,
 Whose name was then on every lip
 In Hood's and Hotham's fleets,
 Though now, with storm and battle worn,
 The brave old ship was left forlorn,
 Abandoned by her crew !
 Nor was the *Captain* coupled less
 With Nelson's wonderful success
 Upon St. Vincent's day ;
 And foundered one as under sail
 She struggled 'gainst but half a gale
 In Biscay's treacherous bay,

* The following were the losses of these battle-ships :—*Invincible* (in 1801), 464 ; *York* (in 1806), 491 ; *Blenheim* (in 1807), 590 ; *Minotaur* (in 1810), 400 ; and of the three lost in 1811, *St. George*, 731 ; *Hero*, 590, and *Defence*, 587.

The point of whose stability,
 By experts much discussed, the sea
 Disposed of finally ;
 But at what heavy cost, alas !
 The names on a memorial brass
 Within St. Paul's displays,
 Where nigh five hundred men are shown
 On board the ship to have gone down,
 With Coles and Hugh Burgoyne.*
 Our Navy's loss in fifty years
 (As from a late Return appears)
 Was seventy ships of war,†
 By wreck or fire the most of these,
 Though six the cruel Arctic seas
 Retained in icy grip,
 And other eight, marked "disappeared,"
 Since they their course from harbour steered,
 No trace have left behind.
 Nor from the hour the port was cleared,
 And they, by friendly voices cheered,
 Were wished a prosperous voyage,

* The *Captain* foundered on the 7th September, 1870, when 472 officers and men perished

† From a Blue Book issued in 1891, it appears 70 ships have been lost since 1840, the majority by shipwreck, including the *Avenger*, frigate, on the African Coast, when only 5 souls were saved; the *Racehorse*, off Chefoo, in 1864, when 99 perished; and the *Serpent*, on the 10th November, 1890, on the coast of Spain, with the loss of 173 lives. The *Jasper* was burnt in 1854, and the Bombay, ten years later, when 91 officers and men perished. Among those disappeared with all hands were the brigs *Nerbudda*, *Sappho*, *Heron*, and *Camilla*, the frigate *Atalanta*, and gunboat *Wasp*. The *Eurydice* foundered, the *Dotterel* blew up, and among those wrecked were the *Raleigh*, frigate; *Conqueror*, of 100 guns; sloops *Driver* and *Polyphemus*, transports *Assistance*, *Transit*, and *Perseverance*, and brig *Wasp* (in 1884), three years before her namesake disappeared in the China Seas.

With hopes of quick return—had word
Of ship or crew been ever heard,
Or aught of either seen !
Some special mention one demands,
Whose name is known in classic lands
In legend and in song.
Euripides and Swinburne show
How Atalanta made a vow
None she outran to wed,
And slew each suitor with a dart,
Although to all she gave a start.
On reaching first the goal,
Till, staying the golden fruit to pick.
Hippomanes, who cast them, quick
Outstripped and won the maid !
Three hundred lads first sailed the sea
(From this time forth their home to be)
On board a training ship
Which bore her name, but ne'er was seen
A vestige of the frigate e'en—
No coop or seaman's chest,
Or plank, with clinging seaweed green.
Or spar upstanding stark and lean.
As spectral as the dead !

XV.

We think of her by Orpheus loved,
Who e'en the gloomy Pluto moved
To listen to his prayer,
When he descended with his lute
To Hades' shades, and all things mute
Enchanted by his song,
Reflecting every varying mood,
Which all his hearers understood
As spell-bound they remained.

While voice and hand in unison
 The praises sang of only one,
 His lost Eurydice!
 Thus flowed the tide of melody,—
 Now passionate and piercing high,
 As might Tyrtæus sing,
 And changing then to cadence low,
 As full of tenderness as though
 By Sappho 'twas inspired,
 While through the lute strings gently sighed
 The wind in murmurs as it died,
 Like an Æolian harp!
 Thus poured he forth his soul in song
 While searching 'mong the listening throng
 For his beloved one,
 Who Orpheus' voice no sooner heard
 Than followed she without a word,
 But as they neared the gate,
 His heart with longings fond so burned
 That on her form to gaze he turned,
 And lost Eurydice!
 Three ships the hapless lovers named,
 Which for a fate the same are famed
 In waters far apart.
 An *Orpheus* ninety years ago
 Was at Jamaica wrecked, and so
 A second met her end*
 Close to the bar of Manakau,
 Upon the wild New Zealand shore
 At the Antipodes;
 While as for the *Eurydice*,
 Which many years had ploughed the sea
 A frigate taunt and trim.

* The *Orpheus* was wrecked off Manakau on the 6th February, 1863, when 190 lives were lost; the *Eurydice* on the 24th March, 1878, when 318 perished; and the *Atalanta* in March, 1880, with a loss of 280.

She had a training-ship become
And from a cruise was nearing home
At happy Christmas-tide,
When standing off the Isle of Wight,
With Portsmouth Harbour full in sight,
And under press of sail,
A sudden squall with furious blast
Capsized the ship, which foundered fast
And carried all below !
Her joyous crew in boyhood's prime,
When dwelling on the happy time
So soon in store for them,
Were face to face with sudden death
In horrid shape their feet beneath,
Without a chance of aid,
And thus, when life was scarce begun,
Its close was reached, its race was run,
And naught remained for them
But to descend in early bloom
Within the portals of the tomb,
From whence is no return !

XVI.

Not since the *Captain* 'neath the wave
Of stormy Biscay foundered, have
We heavier loss sustained
Than when in Syrian waters sank
A battle-ship of first-class rank,
Which bore *Victoria's* name.
Throughout the empire rose the wail
From sorrowing hearts when home the tale
Was brought from Tripoli,
And England's Queen, with grief oppressed,
Unto a stricken land confessed
A sorrow shared by all.

And here a word of praise is due
To the *Victoria's* gallant crew,
Who in that trying hour
Maintained unshaken discipline,
And, marshalled on the deck in line,
With calmness met their doom!
The noble Tryon undismayed,
Upon the bridge, though sinking, stayed
Until beneath his feet
She settled in the yawning deep,
And bore him down where none may weep
Above his lowly bed;
And dearly for his fault he paid
When in his agony he said,
"The blame is mine alone,"
And in his hands concealed his face,
Enduring in that briefest space
A lifetime's bitterness!
But lest a name to conjure with
Should henceforth symbolise a myth
With pain and grief replete,
May, Phoenix-like, another rise
To disconcert our enemies
When perils menace us,
And like the *Victory* may she be,
In war as in calamity
Unrivalled in the fleet.*

* The hope is here expressed that the similarity in the fate of the *Victory*, which was lost on the 7th October, 1744, with Sir John Balchen and 1100 men, and the *Victoria*, which sank on the 22nd June, 1893, with Sir George Tryon and 21 officers and 336 men, may extend to the glories achieved by the namesake of the former, Nelson's flagship.

XVII.

Oft has a ship been lost to view,
Whose actual fate none ever knew
 Since that ill-omened day
When she her anchor gaily tripped,
Or seaward from her moorings slipped.
 With favouring breeze astern,
The cynosure of longing tars,
Who greeted her with loud hurrahs
 As crowding sail aloft,
She like a sea-bird winged her flight
To regions of unending night
 Beyond all human ken.
But time advanced with leaden pace
And rumour said was seen no trace
 Of her upon the route,
And then the words, "Ne'er heard of more,"
Were wafted from the foreign shore
 For which her course was laid,
And never did the ship return,
Or searchers any tidings learn
 Of her mysterious fate !
But well is known the end of most
Of those the sea engulfs, a host
 As numerous as the sands,
And here the scene to paint I'll seek,
Though words indeed are all too weak
 Its terrors to depict.
As hastes the craft before the storm,
The moon displays the ghostly form
 Of breakers right ahead,
But for a moment glancing out
The misty shroud, which then about
 Their dusky shapes is drawn,

While toss the waves their crests to Heaven
Or to the depths are downward driven.

Alternate to and fro :

And all around and on each beam.
Where eye can penetrate, the gleam

Of whitening surf appears !

If trying some English port to reach,
Where every headland, bay, and beach

A well-known spot recalls,
The bells remind of long ago,
And all the past revives as though

'Twere only yesterday,

And backward flows the stream of time
To that blest hour when last the chime

Announced to every ear

Some festal day—a wedding, birth,
Or Easter-tide, when joy on earth

Was tunefully enjoined :

Or New Year's Day, or Christmas morn.
When peals proclaimed a Saviour born

To rescue us from wrath.

Then life with all its dreams was young.
And hopes of happiness were strong

Within each listener's breast,

But now with awful suddenness
The sense of danger and distress

Instils a chilling dread,

And needed but those clanging bells,
Whose voice of merry-making tells.

To deepen their despair !

How terrible, when lifts the haze
Which shrouded all from view, to gaze

Upon a leeward shore,

And feel how slender is the hope
With sails successfully to cope

'Gainst such a hurricane !

And now begins the struggle brief
As from the topsails every reef
Is shaken to the wind,
While groan the masts beneath the strain,
And topsail-yards, fore, mizen, main,
Bend whip-like to the blast.
What though the guns are jettisoned,
To save the ship is now beyond
The agency of man.
Yet battling with the furious gale,
They only yield when every sail
Is torn or blown away !
Approaches now the final hour,
When naught avails of human power
To save the gallant ship,
Which strikes as with an earthquake shock
Upon a pinnacle of rock,
Or sandbank, far from shore,
When every mast goes overboard,
And fail the boats a chance to afford
To gain the distant land,
For all are swamped or washed away ;
And dashes thick the blinding spray
From fo'c'sle head to stern,
While seas on board continuous break.
And to the keel her timbers shake
And sweep right fore and aft.
For some brief moment yet arise
Above the warring sounds the cries
Of seamen battling hard
For life upon the billows' crest
Or striving in the trough to breast
The overmastering sea,
But gleefully the storm-fiend howls,
As Satan might rejoice o'er souls
To black perdition cast ;

And as o'erhead the thunder rolls,
Like some cathedral bell that tolls
The passing of the dead,
Each one betakes him to repose,
That dreamless sleep no waking knows
Until the trump shall sound !
Unnumbered are the nameless graves
Of those who slumber 'neath the waves
They sailed so merrily,
For more than e'er the sword did slay
In all recorded wars, its prey
The greedy sea has made.
No tides but o'er them ebb and flow,
Their sepulchres no climes but know,
Unmarked by cross or stone,
Yet treasured well by loving hearts,
To whom their solitude imparts
A sacredness unknown
To those who at the grave have knelt,
And there beside the lost one felt
The luxury of woe !
To all who in thy depths, Oh sea !
Rest evermore from troubles free
Of battle or of storm,
May none who read these lines deny
The tribute of a passing sigh,
His meed of sympathy !

CANTO VII.



The American War—Frigate Duels—Loss of the *Guerrière*, *Frolic*, *Macedonian*, *Fava*, *Peacock*, *Epervier*, *Penguin*, *Reindeer*, *Boxer* and *Arvon*—Capture of the *Argus*, *Essex* and *President*—The *Shannon* and *Chesapeake*—Algiers—Navarino—Acre—The Russian War—Sebastopol—The Baltic—The Indian Mutiny—Sir William Peel—Our “Little Wars”—China, Burmah, and Egypt—A Retrospect—Conclusion.

I.

Of that disastrous war I sing,
Whose thought the flush of shame will bring
To every Englishman,
Though not for any want of pluck,
For much the Yankees owed to luck,—
As they our frigates met
With heavier vessels, called Razèes,
Although in weight of metal these
Were battleships disguised,—
While over-confidence showed we.
And lack of skill in gunnery,
To which our victories
'Gainst France and Spain were chiefly due.
As Nelson and St. Vincent knew
And on their crews impressed.
First on the British *Guerrière*
The *Constitution* brought to bear
Her heavier broadside fire,
Until, with masts all shot away
And bowsprit gone, she helpless lay.
And plunged at every roll

The muzzles of her main-deck guns
Beneath the seas she shipped in tons
Through all her open ports.
At length her fighting powers were spent,
And Dacres his submission sent
To Hall, the Yankee chief,
And so the *Guerrière's* flag was struck,
Though 'twas not lowered from mast-head truck,
But only from a stump,
While smashed by shot was every boat,
And as the ship no more could float,
They gave her to the flames.
The *Wasp* and *Frolic*, each a brig,
The same in armament as rig,
In action next engaged ;
Though ours, being crippled by a gale,
Could only carry partial sail,
While for the Yankee *Wasp*,
She issued fresh from out her lair
(A harbour on the Delaware)
" A-taunto all " and trim ;
And taking post upon the bow,
The *Frolic* raked her where and how
It pleased her captain best.
Who then on deck with boarders leapt,
And those were left unwounded swept
Below or overboard,
And of one hundred men, her crew,
Were slain or wounded sixty-two.
With all her officers !
As unpropitious were the fates
When next their ship, *United States*,
The *Macedonian* met,
And Carden had within a week
Of Whinyates' loss, the bitter leek
To swallow of defeat.

With guns dismantled, masts all gone,
But one despairing hope alone
Was left the British crew,
And Carden, putting down his helm,
With boarders sought to overwhelm
His stronger foe, until
A round-shot cut the lee fore-brace,
When furthermore her fire to face
Would wanton slaughter cause,
As with the Yankee close astern
Few of his cannon could return
The guns she brought to bear.
On board the *United States* were found
Deserters who on English ground
Had first beheld the light,
And guns there were marked *Victory*
And *Nelson*, manned by sailors she
Had lured from British ships.

II.

The *Java*, like the *Guerriere*
A prize from France, was next to dare
The *Constitution's* fire,
Though fewer guns she had by ten,
While full one-half the *Java's* men
"Land-lubbers" might be termed.
Inferior thus in every way,
The Yankee's guns, when brought to play.
The *Java's* fire subdued.
But Lambert scorned his ship to yield
As long as he the sword could wield
He carried by his side,
And when unable more to fight,
A glorious death preferred to flight,
Which Lambert thought disgrace.

At length he fell, when Ducie Chads
Assumed command, and cheered his lads
 To struggle on awhile,
But had to strike at length to save
From useless butchery the brave
 Survivors of the crew,
And by her captors set on fire,
The *Java* formed a funeral pyre
 For all her gallant dead.*
The *Peacock* next her fortune tried
To stem the rising Yankee tide
 Of maritime defeat,
And though of smaller complement
And carrying fewer guns, was sent
 The *Hornet's* flag to lower,
And than her brave commander, Peake,
None could more eager be to seek
 That honour to attain!
But all his gallantry was vain,
And Peake and many men were slain
 On board the little brig,
Though when their captain, Lawrence, sought
To take his shattered prize to port,
 She sank with all on board!

* Though the *Guerrière*, *Macedonian*, and *Java* were inferior in weight of metal to their opponents, their loss was chiefly due to the bad gunnery of the crews, as is proved by the small damage they inflicted. Roosevelt, an accurate and impartial historian, writes of the action between the *United States* and *Macedonian* that "the American's broadsides were delivered with almost twice the rapidity of those of the Englishman," and with regard to the engagement between the *Constitution* and the *Java*, he says, "One ship's crew had been trained practically and thoroughly, while the other crew was not much better off than the day it sailed." On the other hand the victory of the *Shannon* over the *Chesapeake*, of the *Phæbe* over the *Essex*, and of the *Endymion* over the *President*, was achieved against greater weight of metal and was due to superior gunnery.

Another brig, *Epervier* called,
 Was by a Yankee overhauled,
 Which bore the *Peacock's* name,
 In all respects far better "found,"
 And freshly-started outward bound
 To meet the Britisher,
 Which she with shot so hotly plied
 That Captain Wales for quarter cried,
 And struck the Union Jack,
 Though not before all hope was gone,
 And of her cannon many a one
 Dismounted lay on deck.
 The *Penguin*, too, she overcame,
 Which met a fate as hers the same
 In each particular ;
 And ere the battle was begun,
 It may be said the *Peacock* won,
 So soon her power she showed,
 But yet the gallant Dickenson
 Would neither strike his flag nor run,
 For honour most he sought,
 As was at Lissa nobly showed,
 Where blood from him had freely flowed
 On board the *Cerberus*.
 And now the rest the hero shed,
 And none is nobler 'mong the dead
 Britannia mourns than he !
 As tragic was the *Reindeer's* fate,
 Whose loss, indeed, I might relate
 In terms identical.
 She was a sister-ship of those
 Who vainly sought before to oppose
 The Yankee enemy,
 And died her captain, one as brave
 As any who beneath the wave
 Have found a sepulchre !

When Manners saw all chance was passed,
With quick resolve, though bleeding fast
 From many ghastly wounds,
He shouted to his wavering crew,
"Nought now remains for us to do
 But board the American,"
When bullets from the *Wasp's* maintop
To his career put sudden stop,
 And reeling back he fell,
"Oh God!" exclaiming, as he died,
With some who rallied to his side,
 When all the rest retired.
But well his men their chief obeyed,
Though o'er one half with life had paid,
 Or blood, the penalty,
And but a clerk was left on board,
Unscarred, to yield his ship and sword
 Unto the conqueror.
But so shot-riddled was her hull
That soon with water she was full
 And sank with sudden plunge,
And fathoms deep the brig-of-war
Now rests upon the ocean's floor
 With her uncoffined dead!
The *Boxer* to the *Enterprise*
(A vessel double her in size
 And carrying twice her crew)
Was next to strike, though not before
Both captains fell, and she had o'er
 One third her seamen lost.
Though England then the tables turned,
And thrice the vaunting Yankees learned
 The lesson to submit.
The *Argus*, an American,
Was captured by the *Pelican*,
 When fell her gallant chief;

And drank the *Essex* of the draught
Which many British ships had quaffed
In the hour of their defeat,
And she her colours lowered abaft,
Unable 'gainst an English craft,
The *Phæbe*, to contend.*
More brilliant was the capture made
When Captain Hope the *Endymion* laid
Beside the *President*,
Which fled, when setting sail in chase,
He overhauled the ship apace
And brought her to a stand,
And soon Decatur struck to Hope. †
Afraid with our *Pomone* to cope,
Then coming up astern.
The *Arvon*, which in force was like
The *Reindeer*, was the next to strike
To Blakeley of the *Wasp*,
But our *Castilian* hove in sight,
On which the Yankee took to flight.
And sank her shattered prize,
While ne'er the *Wasp* was seen again
But foundered in a hurricane,
Unseen by human eye.

* Admiral Farragut, "the Nelson of the American Navy," as Mahan calls him in his "Life," was a midshipman in the *Essex*, and describes the scene of carnage on board, 24 men being killed and 45 wounded. The *Phæbe*, Captain Hillyar, which carried 42 guns to 46 of the American's, was aided by the *Cherub*, 20.

† The *President* lost three lieutenants and 32 men killed, and her commander, three officers, and 66 men wounded. Her capture was due to the more rapid and accurate fire of the *Endymion*, which had 11 killed and 14 wounded, and by this success received ample amends for a repulse suffered by her boats, when two officers and 26 men were killed and two officers and 35 wounded.

III.

Scarce broken might the record be
Of maritime calamity,

But that in Philip Broke
The British Navy boasted still
An officer possessed of skill

As boundless as his pluck,
Of which, indeed, no want was shown,
Although in gunnery we must own

Our crews were overmatched.
But in this instance 'twas not so,
As Broke the Yankees made to know

When to the *Shannon's* crew
For quarter they were fain to cry,
And floated o'er their standard high

The flag our frigate bore.
Of her the sailors used to say,
That drill at quarters night and day

Made life no pleasant one
For such as loved their ease. Eftsoons.
It was no place for idle loons

Where Broke was in command!
A challenge as a compliment
By Broke off Boston port was sent

To Captain Lawrence, now
The *Chesapeake's* commander, who
His pennant in the *Hornet* flew

When struck the *Peacock* brig,
And, confident his recent feat
Upon the *Shannon* to repeat,

He seized the tempting bait.
The morning was the First of June,
Made "glorious" once by Howe! and noon
From Boston's towers had chimed,

When sailed the *Chesapeake*, as taunt
 And smart a craft as e'er did vaunt
 Her flag's supremacy,*
 And all was confidence and joy
 From captain to "lob-lolly-boy"
 To "whip the Britisher!"
 First Lawrence fired a signal gun,
 And then Columbia's banner flung,
 Star-spangled, to the breeze,
 When promptly followed Broke's reply.
 As challenger and challenged nigh
 Each other quickly drew.
 Up went the flag—red, white, and blue—
 Upon a field of snowy hue,
 By all with cheers received,
 And as the Jack of England flew
 From peak, and truck, and cross-tree, too.
 Said Broke unto his men :
 " Let everyone his duty do
 And prove himself a Briton true
 And worthy of his ship,
 For England's honour is at stake,
 And we must all the *Shannon* make
 A famous name for aye !"
 No seaman but with ardour heard.
 And to the echo cheered, each word
 Of their well-trusted chief,
 And for the fight, so long desired
 That hope in every breast expired,
 Prepared with eagerness.
 How spirit-stirring is the scene
 That's shown a frigate's decks between
 When she's for action cleared !

* The *Chesapeake's* broadside weight of metal was 590 pounds, and that of the *Shannon* 538, while the former's crew numbered 376, and the latter's 306. The day was the nineteenth anniversary of Howe's victory.

Outside the guns their muzzles grim
Project, while all the tackles trim
Are neatly coiled within,
And bare is every brawny arm,
And to their waists are stripped, for warm
And deadly work, the tars,
Fine stalwart forms in manhood's prime,
Their country's pride, for whom the time
Has come to do or die !
All at their quarters silent stand,
With sponge and rammer in the hand,
And handspikes ready placed :
And ranged in racks the boarding-pike
And cutlass, to repel or strike,
As need necessitates ;
Nor should one feature be forgot—
The boys with cartridges the shot
From cannon to propel.
Mere children, " powder-monkeys " dubbed,
But who in action shoulders rubbed
With men of age mature.
What readiness and smartness there,
And order in the quarters, bare
Of aught that might impede
The use of warfare's needful gear,
Arranged in due proportion near
The eager combatants,
And, oh ! the faces of the men,
With light of battle radiant when,
Impatient to begin,
They hear at length the order given,
And see the decks by round-shot riven
To splinters 'neath their feet,
While bullets fly and burst the shell,
Whose ravages the thoughts dispel
By weary waiting bred,

And each can give the fullest scope
To sentiments of joy or hope,
Ferocity or hate !

IV.

Such was the scene presented now,
As steering for the Yankee's bow,
The *Shannon* slowly closed,
With breeze abeam, but not before
Her fourteenth main-deck cannon bore
(Which was the aftermost)
On her opponent's second port.
By Broke his starboard guns were brought
To bear upon her bow :
And treble-shotted was each gun.
And truly pointed every one
As in succession fired.
The foe replied as rapidly,
Till both jib-sheet and topsail-tye
Were severed by the fire,
And she flew up into the wind,
When gallant Broke made up his mind
To board the *Chesapeake*.
Just then his ship's fore-topmast stay
Was by a round-shot cut away,
Which brought her to the wind :
When he resolved without delay
At cutlass point to end the fray.
And calling up his men,
As fell the *Chesapeake* on board.
The *Shannon's* captain drew his sword.
And threw away the sheath,
And surely ne'er in hour of need
Did braver chieftain give a lead
Or follow better men !

The words had barely left his lips,
And almost ere the rival ships
Collided with a shock,
Our bo'sun, Stevens, lashed her taut,
And his commander, quick as thought
And faster than the wind,
As side by side the frigates laid,
Sprang nimbly on a carronade,
Whence bounding on the rail,
On board the *Chesapeake* he stood
With twenty British tars, as good
As ever trod a deck.
A short and desperate conflict rose,
But quickly Broke o'ercame his foes,
Now to the fo'c'sle driven,
Who sued for quarter, which he gave
Upon a pledge, their lives to save,
No more to draw the sword,
Though some, with treacherous purpose filled,
Broke wounded and a seaman killed.
But soon were all despatched.
But fifteen minutes only passed
Between the first discharge and last,
And barely four since Broke
His ship beside the Yankee found,
Whose bulwarks clearing at a bound,
He stood upon her deck,
When all resistance ceased, and high
St. George's Cross waved jauntily
Above the Stars and Stripes!
Meanwhile a dashing feat was done,
One would, though by itself, alone
The action make unique.
The *Shannon's* foretop midddy, Smith,
Along the frigate's foreyard with
Some seamen made his way,

And by the Yankee's mainyard, squared,
 Her top the gallant youngster dared
 To enter with his men,
 Where some he slew or drove below,
 And overboard the rest did throw,
 And stood the victor there !
 Another lad, named Cosnahan,
 The *Shannon's* maintop midshipman,
 Their mizen likewise cleared,
 And all, from Broke to every man
 And even the youngest boy, who ran
 To fetch the cartridges,
 Their duty well performed this day,
 And will the *Shannon's* name for aye
 Proud memories recall ;
 With his, who from outside her rail
 The Yankee lashed beneath a hail
 Of balls and cutlass blows ;
 And Samwell, midshipman, as well,
 Who, while assisting Stevens, fell,
 And First Lieutenant Watt.*
 As for the *Chesapeake*, her dead
 Included Lawrence, who had led
 The *Hornet* with success,
 And Ludlow, senior " luff," and thus
 The *Peacock* was avenged by us,
 And Peake, whom Lawrence slew !

V.

And now the pipe is heard, " All hands
 The main-brace splice," when joyous bands
 Of seamen troop abaft.

* The *Shannon's* loss was 25 killed, and 59 wounded, and that of the *Chesapeake*, 48 slain, including 6 officers, and 99 wounded, of whom 10 were officers.

As ready grog to drink as fight,
For sounds the bo'sun's whistle right
When tuned to either call.
These customs now no longer hold,
Though in our Navy centuries old.
And temperance is the rule,
While "Piping hands to Grog" the tars
Who'll fight in all our future wars,
Will never hear again,
But lime-juice will their bellies fill,
And honest Jack no more will swill
His welcome "tot" of rum!
Some yachts from Boston came to see
The *Shannon* towing on the lee
Of their own *Chesapeake*,
But 'twas, alas! the other way,
And soon in Halifax they lay
Secure beside the quay.
While Boston folk another tune
This second "Glorious First of June"
Than "Yankee Doodle" sang!
Broke's deed was told to Wellington.
Who had but just Vittoria won,
And thus he toasted him:
"Success to Broke with three times three,
And to the *Shannon's* company
Good luck throughout the war!"
And thrice all hail, say I, to Broke,
Who, when ill-luck our ships o'ertook,
In many a desperate fight,
The nettle, danger, firmly gripped,
And from the Yankee bugbear stripped
The mask it had assumed.
And when they sailed to take his ship,
And swore they'd "all creation whip,"
Upon the *Chesapeake*

He then "the dogs of war let slip,"
And fain was she "to take a trip"
To port with him instead !

VI.

The Navy's palmy days were o'er
When closed the sanguinary war
Which Europe long convulsed,
Though since Lord Nelson passed away
No longer fleets in proud array
Did battle as of yore.
The year succeeding Waterloo,
With fourteen ships-of-war Pellew
Before Algiers appeared,
And casting anchor in the bay,
Where Blake before had made the Dey
Submit to his demands,
In the *Queen Charlotte* led the way,
Round which our squadron clustered lay
With half-a-dozen Dutch.
The live-long day the battle raged,
With undiminished fierceness waged
By all the combatants,
But 'ere the night their forts were razed,
The buildings in the city blazed.
And all the ships in port,
And Exmouth sounded slavery's knell,
As from twelve hundred bondsmen fell
The fetters they had worn !
An enemy our Navy found
And echoes roused on classic ground,
The home of heroes once,
When with old foes and foes to be
(The French and Russian squadrons) we
Attacked a Turkish fleet.

Long struggled Greece in deadly fight
'Gainst laws enforced by Moslem might,
And now she breathless lay,
While Europe and the world cried shame,
And Christendom was all aflame
At Ibrahim Pasha's deeds,
Who made a desert of Morea,
And through the country far and near
Bore rapine, fire, and sword.
First Byron came upon the scene,
And though too brief his stay had been,
His spirit he infused,
And when on Missolonghi's shore
The poet died three years before
The hour of freedom struck,
Fair Hellas found a mightier friend
In England's fleet, which made an end
Of Turkish tyranny.
The ships of France and of the Czar
With ours assembled from afar,
To aid the patriot Greeks,
And all were under Codrington,
Who the *Orion* led upon
The day of Trâfalgar,
Though in the bay of Navarin
A Gallic squadron now was seen
His orders to obey.
A shot was fired, none knew by whom,
And Navarino was the tomb
Of some three thousand men,
Who died on board the eighty sail,
Which Ibrahim boasted would prevail
Against the Christian fleet,
The thunder of whose cannon might
The Grecian warriors from the night
Of death itself have roused.

And told them that the land was free
 From Sparta to Thermopylæ,
 From Thebes to Marathon !
 Our tars their hands at Acre tried
 And humbled Meh'met Ali's pride
 When Turkish troops had failed,
 And Egypt's warlike Viceroy saw
 His dream of empire fade before
 Their fire like mists at dawn.
 Two thousand Moslems bit the dust—
 For Stopford said the Crescent must
 Be lowered before the Cross—
 Who Paradise to enter in,
 And all its promised *houris* win,
 Life gladly sacrificed ;
 And Meh'met Ali sued for peace,
 And by the terms engaged to cease
 From troubling in the East.

VII.

When fourteen years had fled apace,
 Our Navy had the Czar's to face,
 So lately our ally ;
 While Turkey—who was worsted when.
 At Navarino, Englishmen
 With Gaul and Russ combined—
 Was now upon the winning side,
 And Russia's ships upon the tide
 Were nowhere to be seen ;
 Although her army crossed the Pruth,
 And sought some provinces, forsooth.
 From Turkey to annex,
 But France and England interposed,
 Beat back the Bear and ringed his nose,
 And made him dance their tune.

The fabled land of Chersonese,
Where Jason for the Golden Fleece

On board the *Argo* sailed,
Became the theatre of war,
And to Sebastopol the Czar

His soldiery despatched,
Who swarmed like bees within a hive,
Though few were destined to survive
The perils of the siege.

From want the allies suffered less,
Though in the trenches sore distress

Endured they from the cold.
For gales prevailed, and ice and snow
The face of nature hid as though

They were her winding sheet ;
And none can tell, or pen indite,
The horrors of the Arctic night

On that exposed plateau,
While furious grew the fight and fast,
As dragged the weary winter past,

With seldom a success.
Some ships with honoured names appear,
And as in former times, so here

Each nobly played her part.
Although our tars had little scope,
For with no flag afloat, what hope

Was there of winning fame ;
And wooden walls 'gainst those of stone
Unable were to cope alone.

As showed Fort Constantine.
The greatest loser there was one
Which bore the name of *Albion*,

And as in Nelson's day,
The *Agamemnon*, Lyons' ship,
Was prominent on every lip,
As was the *Sanspareil* ;

But not a shot was fired at sea,
 For all their fleet the enemy
 Had scuttled in the port.
 One thousand seamen went ashore,
 With Lushington as Commodore,
 And Keppel later on,
 And fifty pieces worked they well
 Until the mighty fortress fell,
 When they returned on board.
 Among those earned the prized V.C.
 Were Burgoyne, Hewett, Bythesea,
 With Peel and Commerell,
 And Lyons should be named beside.
 Who in the sloop *Miranda* died,
 The Admiral's gallant son.
 And Symonds, Dacres, Mends, and he,
 Brave Osborn, for discovery
 In Arctic seas renowned.
 The Baltic, Nelson's battle-ground,
 Saw England's power at Bomarsund
 Triumphantly displayed,
 But Cronstadt's forts defied her might,
 Of which our squadron lay in sight
 Though Napier failed to attack,
 For wooden walls had seen their day,
 And armour-clads would henceforth play
 The part which they had filled,
 Although Dundas, when in command,
 The Sweaborg forts by sea and land
 Bombarded with effect.

VIII.

The scene now shifts to far Bengal.
 Where arduous times our tars and all
 Of English blood await—

Long marches 'neath a burning sun,
And desperate battles, always won.
 With sieges and assaults,
And many a hardly-gained Relief,
Whose failure death ensured, so brief
 The time was left for aid,
As but a day, sometimes an hour,
Had seen the extinction of our power
 'Mid scenes of massacre !
Our countrymen were hardly pressed,
And many thought and some confessed
 That India to retain
Our strength to breaking point would test,
Though in the breach stood England's best,
 Resolved to win or die,
For in that hour of storm and stress
The spirit of our sires, no less
 Than in the days of Clive,
With stern resolve each man inspired,
And even the tender women fired
 With noble fortitude.
Our seamen landed from the ships,
And *Shannon's* name on English lips
 Was current as of yore ;
Though justice but compels to say
The heat and burden of the day
 Were shared by other crews.
As sailors landed months before
From Indian Navy men-of-war.*
 While people, panic-struck.

* The Indian Navy landed during the mutiny in Bengal, 60 officers and 1,800 European seamen, with 42 field-pieces. They were organised in detachments of 100 men with three officers, and two guns, and saw much service against the mutineers in defending outlying stations. Two officers gained the V.C. during these operations, but no rewards or honours were conferred on the Service, which was abolished six years later with scant ceremony or gratitude.

On board them flocked to save their lives,
Or placed their families and wives
Where danger could not come,
And all the crews a welcome gave
To such as sought on Hooghly's wave
The safety land denied.
Those pennants floating on the breeze,
And frowning cannon, showed to these
And to the mutineers
Britannia had her ægis thrown
Above all loyalists in town
Till order was restored ;
And more than one up-country place
With joyous greetings hailed the face
Of honest Jack ashore,
For ere he came upon the scene,
"The Devil and deep sea between"
(To borrow Jervis' phrase)
Was everyone of English birth,
As in most stations was a dearth
Of European troops.
The *Shannon's* crew by Peel were led,
Than whom his friend, Lord Wolseley, said,
He knew no braver man,
And told me how he once had seen
Him tear from off a magazine
Some sandbags while on fire ;
And with the Guards at Inkerman,
And at the assaults upon Redan,
Was Peel, the *Diamond's* chief :
And by his side a middy stood,
Since known by all as Evelyn Wood,
Who wounds, like him, received.
Now Peel again before Lucknow
Well showed the rebel Pandies how
The *Shannons* served their guns.

Of eight-inch bore and twenty-fours.
A size unknown in previous wars
Upon the battle-field,
And oft with skirmishers in front,
As once before Cawnpore, the brunt
They bore of the attack.
As much at home on land as sea,
For England dark the day would be
She reared no sons like Peel,
Who was of that heroic mould,
Which neither love of ease nor gold
Has any power to attract.

IX.

Hail ! classic land of Prester John,
In legend famed, and rhymed in song,
The home of Rasselas,
Where fought our tars at Arogee,
And served their rocket battery
Before Magdala's walls,
When Napier humbled Theodore,
The Abyssinian Emperor,
Who perished sword in hand,
Again they served in Ashantee,
(Or 'Shanteeland the name should be)
When Wolseley beat the foe
At Essaman and Akinfoo,
And Amoâful, Ordahsu,
Across the river Prah,
And on Coomassie moved ahead,
Whence Koffee, panic-stricken, fled
Into the forest's depths,
Although for peace the monarch sued
When later Glover rendezvoused
Within its ruined walls.

Of those who died were Blake and Wells,
And Wolseley in despatches tells
 Of Luxmoore, Grubbe, and Rolfe,
While Commerell in action bled,
When for a time Fremantle led
 Till Hewett took command.
Oft has New Zealand seen our tars
Engaged with troops in storming Pahs,
 Or fortified stockades,
And well the colours of the Queen
Were borne by seaman and Marine
 In Southern Africa,
Who braved the Zulu assegai
In "Tommy Atkins'" company
 On many a battle-field,
And oft in laager in the bush,
Or open veldt, they met the rush
 Of thousands charging there,
Who made the welkin ring with yells,
Repelling them, as Chelmsford tells,
 With slaughter every time.
On Isandhlwana's lonely hill,
Where Zulus swarmed around to kill
 The handful there at bay,
And in Ekowe's leaguered post,
Defended 'gainst the savage host
 Until relief arrived,
And elsewhere oft were "Jack" and "Joe" *
As glad ashore to meet the foe
 As on the boundless sea!

* The sailor and marine have long been as familiar under their nick-names of "Jack" and "Joe," as the soldier has now become under that of "Tommy Atkins."

X.

In China and throughout its seas,
In Borneo and the Celebes,
Our Navy kept the peace,
And Keppel and the *Dido's* crew
The Dyaks made for terms to sue,
When aiding Rajah Brooke,
And many thousand pirates slew
And made the chiefs the day to rue
They measured swords with them.
When war with China first began,
For some two years or so it ran
Its course successfully,
With Gough and Parker in command,
The last afloat, the first on land,
And oft were disembarked
Brigades of seamen from the fleet,
In friendly rivalry to meet
From Queen's and Company's ships.*
The Chinese had no pleasant time,
Although with insolence sublime
They talked of victories,
Till they were taught that guns of wood
And junks with painted eyes withstood
A cannonade but ill.

* The East India Company's Navy co-operated in the China War of 1840-1842 with a squadron of steam-ships, and in the later wars with that country and Burmah. Admiral Lord Alcester, in a letter to the writer dated April 18, 1877, says, "The Indian Navy was a service which ranked among its officers some of the finest and best fellows I have seen during a career of over forty-three years, and I ever endeavoured to show to the officers my appreciation of its merits wherever we met. Their knowledge of Eastern languages and of the countries in which they served so continuously—countries never or rarely visited at that time by any other officers—was of the greatest possible service."

And roused in Jack the laughing mood.
While giving powder ample food
 In Chinese flesh and blood.
A second time we came to blows,
And Fatshan Creek our pig-tailed foes
 Will scarcely soon forget.
Or Canton's capture ; though we met
The sole repulse encountered yet
 Before the Peiho Forts,
Where fell Vansittart with above
Four hundred men, who vainly strove
 To take the works by storm.
The spectacle, described in brief,
Was like the scene at Teneriffe
 When Nelson lost his arm,
And all our seamen valour showed.
While many gun-boats thence were towed.
 Disabled by the fire,
And three were sunk, and Commerell—
Who, after Shadwell wounded fell,
 The storming party led—
The remnant safely brought on board.
Who had escaped the fire and sword.
 Of o'er five hundred men.
Though wounded, Hope his admiral's flag
Thrice shifted, like Sir Edward Spragge
 When fighting with the Dutch,
And scorned the gunboat's deck to leave,
And there alone would he receive
 The surgeon's needed aid.
A friendly Yankee commodore
Our ships assisted to withdraw
 When peril threatened most,
And Tatnall, when he proffered aid,
"Than water blood is thicker" said,
 And proved he thought 'twas so !

"Great countries wage no little wars"—

So said "the Duke," who gave the laws

On martial matters once—

But England's interests, world-wide now,

Demand that we her flag should show

Where none else could appear.

In Burmah oft has this been proved,

And till the sceptre we removed

From Theebaw's feeble grasp,

Three expeditions India sent

Against the Burmese Government

Since Eighteen twenty-four,

When Richards conquered Arracan,

And Campbell Burmah overran.

And pushing on to Prome

By Irrawaddy's turbid flood,

Beneath the walls of Ava, stood

With fifteen hundred men,

Where Burmah's monarch made a stand,

The last for his misgoverned land,

And suffered final rout.

Here Brisbane served, who Algiers saw,

And Chads, who in the Yankee war

The *Java* yielded up,

And Marryat in the earlier part,

Whose novels fire the youthful heart

With fervour for the sea,

And many an English mother's son

Has Marryat for the Navy won

By his delightful tales.

Again, in 'Fifty-two, the cheer

Of seamen sounded on the ear

When Rangoon city fell,

Where arduous fighting then began,

And Prome they took and Martaban,

And Bassein town as well ;

But were repulsed at Donabew,
Where Captain Loch the Burmese slew,
 With many of his men ;
Though soon the works were stormed by Cheape,
When foremost Wolseley was to reap
 The honours of the breach,
As pushing up the wooded steep,
He wounded fell amid a heap
 Of foes and soldiers slain.

XI.

As in the century's opening year,
So near its close our ships appear
 Off Alexandria's port,
And Seymour led where Admiral Keith
Had landed soldiers in the teeth
 Of Kleber's heavy fire ;
But steam, not sail, the fleet propelled,
As when the world was spell-bound held
 By Nelson at the Nile.
'Mong battle-ships assembled there
Were some with names—like *Téméraire*,
 Inflexible, *Superb*,
And *Monarch*—honoured everywhere
By those for England's greatness care
 And all her glorious past.
Each ship the part assigned performed,
And silenced forts, which then were stormed
 By parties from the fleet,
In charge of Lord Charles Beresford,
Who confidence on shore restored,
 And held the captured town,
While cannon, mounted on a train,
Our tars, as though upon the main,
 Directed 'gainst the foe.

Soon Alison with soldiers came,
And set afoot the stirring game
Of war with Arabi ;
Till Wolseley landed on the scene,
And laid his plans to fight between
Ismailia and the Nile,
And in a single night, in strength,
Lesseps' Canal throughout its length
To Suez occupied !
Here Hewett had assumed the charge,
While elsewhere every boat, and barge,
And station Hoskins seized ;
So all the line from far Port Said
Unto the Red Sea's sluggish tide
Was ours without a blow—
A *coup de main* completed in
The Nelson style, by discipline
And promptitude combined.
When inland Wolseley made a start,
Marines and seamen bore a part
In all the skirmishes,
And were engaged in flank and rear,
When from the front Tel-el-Kebir
Was carried with a rush ;
And none who fell on Egypt's sands,
When carrying out the Queen's commands.
In bravery excelled
Young Rawson, who, the stars his guide,
Showed Alison the way, and died
Upon the earthworks' crest !
Next Suakin heard our sailor's cheers,
Who checked the timid townsmen's fears
When Baker met defeat ;
And at El Teb and Tamai bore
A glorious part, and Tofreck saw,
With heavy loss at each,

Though stubbornly they held their ground
While Arabs swarmed in thousands round
The hard-pressed British square,
Which at El Teb was backward forced,
When both the Gardner guns were lost,
Though soon were they regained.
When Wolseley strove to reach Khartoum,
Where Gordon found a soldier's tomb
Scarce thirty hours before,
Our sailors rowed, and marched, and fought,
And by their staunch endeavours sought
To render timely aid :
And Abu Klea and Abu Kru
The British tars, a gallant few,
As ever, found in front.
And when the square fell slowly back,
With Arabs close upon their track.
The Gardners played their part,
Until the barrels jammed again,
When Lord Charles Beresford was fain
To abandon them awhile,
Although our troops, to leave them loth,
Faced round and soon recovered both.
When they reopened fire.
Here perished Pigott and de Lisle,
And strewed was every weary mile
With forms of stricken men,
But Stewart, pushing for the Nile,
Of wounds or death thought nothing while
His task was unfulfilled,
Until, like Burnaby and Earle,
He fell amid the clash and whirl
Of spear and scimitar !
One gallant deed remains to say,
By seamen wrought upon the way
From Gubat to Knartoum.

To Wilson's aid went Beresford—
When wrecked the steamer was on board
Of which he'd lately sailed—
Who ran the gauntlet past the fort,
But by a cannon-shot was brought
Unto a sudden stop,
When Benbow, to the ship attached,
Throughout the night the boiler patched
While lying under fire,
When steamed ahead the gallant lord,
And Wilson's party all restored
In safety to the camp!

XII.

My task is done, my story told,
And if but feebly he'd be bold
Who ventured to suggest
A lack of interest in the theme,
Which could no man unworthy deem
Even Homer's lofty muse.
The keels of English ships their wake
Have ploughed in every sea since I rake
Encompassed first the world,
And as we scan the vista long
Of those whose valiant deeds in song
I've sought to celebrate,
They seem to quicken into life
As when the storm or battle's strife
They faced with readiness.
Once more resounds the clang of arms,
As with invasion's wild alarms
The country-side is filled,
While all the dockyards with the din
Of feverish preparation ring,
As when the Armada came,

And ships of war, the country's pride,
Are floated out at every tide

 Their powder to receive,
And as each one her moorings quits,
And, spreading canvas, seaward flits

 Like gull upon the wing,
On board her consorts swarms of tars
The rigging crowd, and with hurrahs

 Their sympathies attest.
The talk is all of cutting out,
Or boarding, with resistance stout,

 Though vain in every case ;
Of traders from the River Plate,
Which Providence or kindly fate

 Had sent across their path ;
Of Spanish homeward-bound galleons,
With ingots laden and doubloons,

 Inviting their attack ;
Or, better still, of knocks and blows.
In battle 'gainst old England's foes,

 Where honour would be gained.
And talk there was of Sue or Sal,
And festal doings with the pal

 Consorted with the most,
And more than words can say is thought
Of all the joyous hours in port

 When home the ship returns.
But yet, alas ! they know not all
Will thus come back, and some recall

 (The thoughtful few may be)
That far beneath a foreign sky
They may be left ashore, to die

 In hospital alone,
Without a friend to sympathise,
Or after death to close their eyes

 And follow to the grave !

Not long such thoughts in Jack have place.
Who feels already the embrace
Of sweetheart or of foe,
For he to each with ardour clings,
As only Mars or Venus brings
The zest that sweetens life!

BOOK II.

CANTO VIII.

CELEBRATED ADMIRALS—The Howards—Drake and Others—
Blake and his Contemporaries—Herbert and Russell—Rooke
and Shovel—Byng and Benbow—Anson, Boscawen, and
Hawke—Saunders and Watson—Keppel and Rodney—Howe,
Duncan, and St. Vincent—Bridport and the Hoods—Gardner,
Keith, and Collingwood—Troubridge, Cornwallis, Saumarez,
Wallis, and Sydney Smith—Nelson's Captains: Miller, Berry,
Bowen, Fremantle, Thompson, Codrington, Foley, Riou, Parker,
Blackwood, Hardy, and others.

I.

How famous was the sailor band,
Which formed the glory of our land
In England's Golden Age,
Though soldiers were, as Sidney, Vane,
Who made renowned Eliza's reign
On land as they on sea:
And he of all the ages heir,
The swan of Avon's stream, and "rare
Ben Jonson," Shakspeare's friend,
And Spenser, of the "Fairie Queene,"
Whose lively fancy sketched each scene
As though with Nature's hand.
Ere this, when bluff King Harry reigned,
Our seamen were by Howard trained,
Lord Edward, that's to say,

One of the Blake and Nelson sort,
A man, I mean, whose only thought
Was how to beat the foe.

Off Brest he set all sail ahead
And 'gainst a Gallic squadron led

Two vessels from his fleet,
And for the admiral's flagship steered,
When from her bow his galley sheered

And left him on the deck,
Where Lord High Admiral Howard died
With all the boarders by his side,

But seventeen men in all.
This brave commander used to say
That "seamen to be worth their pay
Half mad should always be,"

An axiom Cochrane vowed was true,
And often put in practice, too,

Throughout his long career,
Both in the Old World and the New—
Brazil, and Chili, and Peru.

As once in France and Spain!
Yet more renowned was Effingham,
Who, like his kinsman, Howard, came

From Norfolk's ducal line,
And haughty Spain's Armada foiled,
And Cadiz of its wealth despoiled,

As also the Azores.
Sea captains England had beside,
Who humbled to the dust the pride

Of Philip's proud marine,
For Frobisher the land could boast,
And Raleigh, in himself a host.

And Hawkins bold as he:
Though greater far than these was Drake,
Who more than all conducted to break

The naval power of Spain,

And not till Blake did any rise
Who seemed so great in foreign eyes
As stout Sir Francis Drake.
In full detail I've told above
How Blake 'gainst Tromp and Ruyter strove
Within our narrow seas,
And quite confounded England's foes,
And baffled all the plans of those
Who sought the Dutch to aid,
And brought the Dey upon his knee.
And every Moslem enemy
From Tunis to Algiers.
With him were Lawson, Ayscue, Deane,
And Monk, with more as brave, I ween,
Of whom the first and third,
With Berkeley, Sandwich, Myngs, and Spragge,
In battle fell beside the flag
They cherished more than life,
And deathless will these heroes be
While English hearts such gallantry
With admiration thrills.

II.

Our fleet off Bantry Herbert led,
And showed his skill at Beachy Head
Against a stronger force :
And Russell followed Torrington,
And at La Hogue great glory won
In beating Tourville's fleet,
The first engagement since at Sluys
And under Howard English crews
Engaged the ancient foe.
Gibraltar's victor comes in view,
Great Rooke, who honour as his due
And fadeless glory won,

And off Malaga France's fleet,
By Count Toulouse commanded, beat
 With sanguinary loss ;
And cannonaded Vigo town,
The Spanish colours bringing down
 From ships and batteries,
And burnt galleon and galleasse.
With treasure stored did far surpass
 The dreams of avarice.
Still greater honour even than this
Was one that Rooke could claim as his,
 Who said when death was near :
" Although but little leave I here,
No sailor have I cost a tear
 Or England robbed of aught."*
What elegy could poet sing
That would a dying admiral bring
 So sweet a balm as this !
Sir Cloudesley Shovel next appears.
His memory bedewed with tears
 For his untimely fate ;
And Jennings, Norris, Dilkes, and Leake
The " bubble reputation " seek
 Even at the cannon's mouth :
And Byng, who made the Spaniards fly
When off the Isle of Sicily
 They sought his course to stay :
While Benbow should not be forgot,
Who never fled from foe, I wot,
 Or e'er deserted friend.

* Sir George Rooke's words were : " It is true I leave little behind me, but what I have has been honestly earned. It never cost a sailor a tear nor the country a farthing." This was no little to be able to say in an age of corruption and peculation.

And though no battle Benbow won,
 Our country boasts no worthier son
 In all her glorious past.
 As true as steel, as lion brave,
 No better seaman sailed the wave,
 Or mariner more skilled,
 And fighting for its own sweet sake
 None better loved, or prize to make
 Of foreign merchantmen.
 And any odds he'd sooner face
 Than bear the stigma of disgrace,
 Incurred by taking flight.
 Though rough of tongue, uncouth in mien,
 His honour, like his sword, was keen,
 And could not brook defeat,
 As at his death was nobly shown,
 When unsupported and alone
 He fought du Casse's fleet,
 And high aloft his flag was flown,
 And six to one he would not own
 Beyond the *Breda's* strength !
 Like Grenville. Benbow made an end,
 And all their efforts failed to bend
 His stubborn English will,
 And so he fell before his men,
 Like some great forest denizen
 Within the hunter's toils !

III.

Our Navy's glory somewhat waned,
 And there were critics who complained
 Its sun had set for aye,
 And so it seemed when Admiral Byng
 The French to action feared to bring,
 Like Mathews just before,

Who brought discredit scarcely less,
By his and Lestock's feebleness.

Upon the English name.
But "fish still swim the seas as good
As any taken thence for food,"

So says the adage :
And though these seamen were, indeed,
Unlike those mentioned who in need

Arose in olden time,
Yet some there were whose names will live
As long as Englishmen survive
To glory in their deeds.

A trio Fame's loud trump proclaims
(Boscawen, Anson, Hawke, their names)

In George the Second's reign,
Of whom the greatest of the three
measured by the victory

Off Aix achieved) was Hawke :
Though Anson once, when left alone,
Deserted in the far Ladrone,

His moral grandeur showed,
For with his ship, *Centurion*, gone,
It seemed no hope was left, save one,
Of ever reaching home.

In that conjuncture deep despair
O'erwhelmed the few remaining there,
Apparently to die ;

But though abandoned to his fate,
Or so it seemed, the desperate strait

But nerved the Commodore,
Who, seizing on an axe, began
Encouragement to give each man,

And straightway set about
From a canoe to make a boat
That would on the Pacific float,
And carry them away !

When nineteen days had passed, appeared
The ship which all on shore had feared

The storm had swallowed up,
And now to tears was Anson moved,
Though in adversity he proved

His manly fortitude.

I've told the story in detail
(And to repeat it time would fail)

How oft Boscawen won,
Though he at Pondicherry failed,
But then at Louisburg prevailed

And took Cape Breton isle,
And how the veteran finally,
With Cadiz close upon his lee,

Not far from Tráfalgår,
O'erhauled and overcame La Clue,
His war-ships captured, save a few,
And slew the admiral.

But Hawke to celebrate remains,
A man whose battles all were gains
(And they were not a few),

Who naught of difficulties made
And in extremity displayed

The calm that knows no fear.
In Matthews' partial action none,
Save he, a prize (the *Poder*) won,

Though many were engaged;
And off the Cape of Finisterre.
Where Anson beat La Jonquière.

L'Etendeur Hawke o'ercame,
And in his ship, the *Devonshire*,
Sustained the overwhelming fire

The heavier *Tonnant* brought
Upon the battle-ship to bear,
When Rodney came to take his share.

According to his wont.

With Saumarez and Saunders, who
Their pennants in the *Farmouth* flew
And in the *Nottingham*.
The *Devonshire* by Hawke was steered
Where high above the smoke appeared
L'Etendeur's battle-flag,
And took the *Severn* on the way,
And helped the *Eagle* in the fray,
When well-nigh overborne ;
And greater glory Hawke achieved
When Conflans off Belleisle received
His final *coup-de-grâce*,
Though on the theme I'll not dilate
As fully has been told the fate
Befell his luckless fleet.

IV.

As Saunders aided Wolfe to wrest
From France the sceptre of the West,
So in remoter seas
Did Watson help heroic Clive
The French from Hindostan to drive,
And beat the Grand Mogul ;
And thus with truth it may be said
Quebec and Plassey 'twere that laid
Foundations sure and deep
For England's rule, and now appears
Our flag in both the hemispheres
Supreme on land and sea !
An empire in "the Gorgeous East."
Beyond conception rich and vast,
One victory achieved.
While Wolfe, who at the other died,
An acquisition made which vied
In magnitude with Clive's,

And mighty is the sovereignty,
With bounds that stretch from sea to sea,
 Cemented with his blood.
And Keppel should be mentioned here,
Who rose to be a British peer
 And Admiral of the Fleet.
As captain of a ship-of-war
He served with Hawke before Rochefort
 When nineteen years of age,
And he with Hodgson took Belleisle,
And all the coast blockaded while
 Our soldiers held the place,
And under Pocock had command
Before Havannah, when on land
 His brother led the troops.
The French he fought off Ushant's shore,
But failed a victory to score
 Against d'Orvilliers' fleet,
Though this result was chiefly due
To Palliser, his second, who
 Gave Keppel little aid,
And both by Naval Courts were tried,
When, though this fact was not denied,
 Acquittals they received,
And thanks the King and Parliament
And people of all classes sent
 To Keppel and his men,
And bonfires through the land were lit
As though a victory had knit
 All hearts in unison !
But greater seamen even than these,
And yet more brilliant victories,
 The future had in store,
When Rodney like a Triton rose
From out the sea, and England's foes
 Confounded utterly.

With Hawke great glory he attained
And in the *Eagle* prizes gained,

Not few or far between :
And many harbours up the Seine,
And Havre-de-Grace upon the main,

By Rodney were attacked,
And all the isles called Carribees,
Assisted by the troops, with ease

He captured from the French.
When twenty years or so had passed—
And England found her match at last

In all the foes combined
With our rebellious colonies
To drive our Navy from the seas,

And bring our honour low—
Then Rodney at his best appeared,
And e'er his fleet Gibraltar neared.

The Count Langara's ships
He brought to action, taking seven.
While all the rest away were driven

To shelter in their ports,
And Rodney disembarked supplies
And put to flight the enemies

Who had blockaded "Gib."
For the West Indies thence he sailed,
And when near Martinique assailed

De Guichen's greater fleet,
And won a triumph o'er de Grasse.
Which 'mong the most renowned will class

By any admiral gained,
And England's fame was greatly raised,
While Rodney's like a meteor blazed

Upon the midnight sky,
For to a glorious end he brought
A war with much disaster fraught

And loss of colonies.

V.

As closed this conflict so began
The next, with Howe, a veteran
Of three-score years and ten.
Who, by his victory, at a bound
Our prestige, which he damaged found,
Raised on a pinnacle.
Now England's stream of triumph flows
Scarce chequered by defeat, and grows
In volume till appear
The admirals who the watery main
Britannia's made in George's reign.
As Wellington the land ;
And glorious deeds achieved by sires
Quite paled their ineffectual fires
Before the feats they wrought !
With Anson Howe had sailed the world.
And saw our flag in seas unfurled
Unvisited since Drake ;
And once, with Boscawen close at hand.
His ship, *Dunkirk*, off Newfoundland.
L'Alcide compelled to strike ;
And when he led the *Magnanime*,
The *Thésée*, as she lay abeam,
Was by a broadside sunk.
'Twas blowing hard, with darkness nigh.
And ran the billows mountains high
Upon the shore of Aix.
When Howe the *Hero* next assailed.
Whose colours in defeat were trailed
And she was burnt ashore.
Thus Howe with credit stood the test
When serving with the skilfullest
Of England's admirals ;

And when with Yankeeland we warred,
And France and Holland drew the sword,
And Spain assistance gave,
Lords Howe and Rodney had command,
And though defeated on the land
We held our own at sea.
The allies "Gib" invested fast,
When Howe the third relief, and last,
The fortress brought, and thus,
As Rodney had afforded aid,
And Darby broke the long blockade,
Which France and Spain resumed,
So in our soldiers' time of want,
When cartridges and food were scant,
And hope had almost fled,
Howe, sailing in compact array,
The allied squadron drove away
And saved the garrison!
When Rodney left the scene of strife,
With coming war the air was rife.
And in the following year
Lord Howe, on whom were turned all eyes,
One of the greatest victories
The world has known achieved,
When on the "Glorious First of June"
Our mariners the stirring tune
Of "Rule Britannia" sang,
Until the martial pæan round
The earth a chain of music wound,
That rings unbroken still!

VI.

Scarce less than Howe's was Duncan's fame,
Who of that galaxy became
One of the brightest stars,

Like Bridport and his brother Hood,
 And Cochrane, Jervis, Collingwood,
 Pellew, and Sydney Smith,
 And he with genius most imbued,
 That star of greatest magnitude,
 The victor of the Nile!
 With warlike ardour all athirst,
 Of all the fleet was Duncan first
 When Rodney had command,
 And in the *Monarch* tackled three
 Of Count Langara's ships when he
 Off Cadiz crossed his path;
 And with the *Blenheim* met the shock
 Of battle foremost when "the Rock"
 By Howe was last relieved.
 The first *Foudroyant* Duncan now
 (Succeeding Jervis) led, with Howe
 As admiral-in-chief—
 Which Gardiner won when he was slain
 With France's admiral, du Quesne,
 A score of years before.
 But though the services were great
 By Duncan rendered to the State
 In both the previous wars,
 They all were cast into the shade
 When he the fleet of Holland laid
 Submissive at his feet.
 Scarce passed a month for years but nigh
 The Texel's shore did Duncan fly
 His colours at the main,
 And e'er the *Venerable's* form
 In summer's calm or winter's storm
 Was present on the coast—
 A veritable *Phantom Ship*,
 To which no Dutchman gave the slip
 Throughout the long blockade.

Oft when the fog would blow aside,
Her ghost-like shape was seen to glide
Over the sullen sea ;
Or when the tempest at its height
Gave evidence of Ocean's might
And human littleness,
Amid the blinding sleet and snow,
When in the clouds a rift would show,
Although but transiently,
There was she found the waves to ride
And like an albatross abide
Upon the wing serene !
Thus Duncan watched their fleet for long,
Although it was in force as strong
As that blockading them,
And gained his richly-earned reward
When on the quarter-deck his sword
De Winter yielded up,
And 'mong the jewels deck the crown
Of England's victories, Camperdown
Will ever brightly shine,
While History's Muse will Duncan give
A foremost place 'mong those who live
Immortal in her page !

VII.

Against the Spaniards Jervis led,—
A seaman in the Navy bred
From childhood's tender years,—
Who had his pennant, as I've shown,
On board the first *Foudroyant* flown,
And captured the *Pégase* ;
And under Keppel Jervis fought,
And aid, with Howe, Gibraltar brought
When in her direst need.

While in command, a whole decade,
 Her crew he celebrated made
 For skill in gunnery,
 And 'twas to this neglected art—
 Which thoroughly did he impart
 To all beneath his flag—
 That when our largest fleet he led,
 His victory was attributed,
 And that with warranty,
 As Nelson foremost was to own,
 And said that discipline alone,
 Or valour, would have failed,
 Though genius shared, perhaps, as much
 In winning England triumphs such
 As his at Aboukir.
 I will not here again dilate
 Upon the Spanish squadron's fate,
 Detailed by me before,
 Which Jervis off St. Vincent met,
 When Nelson an example set
 That all the fleet amazed.

VIII.

Both Bridport and his brother, Hood,
 (*Arcades ambo !*), foremost stood
 'Mong seamen of their day.
 And first would rank in any clime
 Though England's Navy oftentime
 Has had as good as they.
 As captain of the *Antelope*
 Successfully did Bridport cope
 With France's *Aquilon*,
 Which with impunity had preyed
 For many years on British trade
 In Europe's southern ports :

And then the *Warwick* he retook.
And Howe assisted when he broke
Gibraltar's long blockade ;
And under Keppel fighting saw
Off Ushant in the former war,
When leading the *Robust* ;
And then as admiral he upon
The "First of June" fresh glory won
On board the *Royal George*.
When Bridport cruised the following year
The Channel of the French to clear.
Joyeuse he met again
(The same whom Howe to action brought)
Who lost three ships and safety sought
Within the Isle of Groix ;
And thus was closed a great career,
Although his counsel when a peer
Was greatly in request.
His elder brother, Samuel named,
Was equally with Bridport famed,
And honours won the same.
When serving in the *Winchelsea*
Young Hood was wounded dangerously,
And under Boscawen
Assisted Louisburg to take
And all Cape Breton island make
A British Colony.
The *Vestal* gave the French no rest
When, under Hood, she cruised off Brest
And picked up merchantmen,
And took the frigate, *la Bellone*,
Of metal equalling her own.
When Admiral-in-command,
Sir Samuel Hood off Martinique,
And once again near Chesapeake,
Engaged the Count de Grasse ;

And then next year off isle St. Kitt's
Displayed his skill and sharper wits
By out-manceuvring him,
And when he had decoyed him out.
With all his fleet he "put about"
And anchored in his place,
Which so enraged the Count de Grasse
That twice he vainly sought to pass
Within the port he'd left.
In Rodney's victory much he wrought.
And in the van of battle fought
That famous April day.
While in Toulon he held command.
When loyal Frenchmen made a stand
'Gainst the Directory,
And Corsica he overran,
Though Nelson 'twas the island won.
Which soon, howe'er, was lost.
His nephew, Samuel, well sustained
The glory by his namesakes gained
In three great naval wars.
And served in Bridport's ship, *Robust*.
Where he acquired his uncle's trust
For bravery and skill,
And in the *Barfleur*, under Hood,
Whose captain then was Collingwood.
He sailed for many years.
Thus in the actions with de Grasse.
The younger Hood, it came to pass.
An active part sustained,
And though he failed at Teneriffe,
His ardent spirit found relief,
Like Nelson's, at the Nile,
Where in the van of England's might
The *Zealous* in the waning light
He steered most skilfully.

And made the *Guerrier* strike to him,
Which could the seas no longer swim
And to the flames was given.
With Saumarez he met defeat,
When they were fain to make retreat
From Algeciras Bay,
And left the *Hannibal* a wreck—
With Teneriffe the only check
By English arms received.
Their admiral's flagship Hood attacked,
But found the *Venerable* lacked
The power to meet her fire,
And soon her masts were shot away
When, destitute of spar or stay,
She drifted on the rocks,
Till Goodwin Keats appeared in sight,
And rescued from her dangerous plight
The famous *Seventy-four*,
Which Duncan's flag aloft had flown
Four years before at Camperdown
And havoc spread around.
He held command at Trinidad,
And what possessions Holland had
In the West Indies took,
Together with Tobago isle,
And Santa Lucia, which awhile
By France had been possessed;
And when he closely blocked Rochefort,
A frigate squadron chased off shore,
And captured all but one,
Though long the action was and warm,
And ere it closed he lost an arm,
But soon returned afloat;
And last against the Russians Hood
A shot discharged in angry mood,
And took the *Sevcolod*.

IX.

Lord Gardner first gunpowder smelt
 When Dennis death and damage dealt
 The *Raisable*—she
 Which Nelson as a midly knew
 When Maurice Suckling's pennant flew
 As captain of the ship ;
 And then he served with Faulknor, who
 To action brought the *Courageux*,
 And forced her to submit,
 And thus it was young Gardner's boast
 With captains to have served, the most
 Renowned we then possessed.
 When in the *Maidstone*, Twenty-eight,
 He took the frigate *Lion*, late
 A merchantman of France,
 And led the *Sultan*, Seventy-four,
 Which lost in Byron's action more
 Than any present there.
 In Rodney's famous victory
 The *Duke*, a Ninety-eight, led he.
 Which had the second place
 And foremost was the line to pierce.
 When Gardner with persistence fierce
 De Grasse compelled to yield ;
 And when a dozen years had fled,
 Upon the " First of June " he led
 As admiral of the White,
 And thus his fortune 'twas to play
 A part when victory crowned the day
 With Rodney and with Howe.
 His flag he flew on board the *Queen*,—
 Which foremost in the fight was seen,
 And captured the *Femappes*,

Although she lost one hundred men,—
And saw the action (last of ten)

Next year by Bridport won,
And so his services at sea
Few men in naval history

In number can exceed.
The admiral known as Elphinstone
As Baron Keith a peerage won

Ere ended his career,
Of whom the best that can be said
Is that he won the Cape, and led

With Nelson under him,
And Hotham skilful was no less,
Whom in their navy to possess

What would our foes have given !
Such were the seniors of the fleet,
But England others had should meet

Some recognition here,
And Collingwood was one of these,
A man whom nature formed to please

In peace, and lead in war.
The Gallic *Berkeley* captured he
And *l'Amethyste* compelled to flee

Before the *Crescent's* fire,
And in the *Barfleur*, under Howe,
Did Collingwood his valour show

Upon "the First of June,"
And was with Jervis prominent
On board his ship, the *Excellent*,

Which rendered Nelson aid ;
And when he died, beside his chief
(Whose end, though glorious, filled with grief

The soul of Collingwood)
They laid him in St. Paul's, and brief
The time was e'er the cypress wreath

His honoured tomb bedecked.

X.

No mariner e'er dared the wave
More skilled in seamanship and brave
Than Troubridge, Nelson's friend,
Who at St. Vincent led the van,
And none from boy to veteran
But trust in him reposed ;
While 'twas of Troubridge Nelson said,
" The British Navy never bred
A better man than he."
And his " superior," he declared,
Was one who in the *Dolphin* shared
His berth as midshipman.
Of all his friends most dearly loved,
The victor of the Nile was moved
To share his vain regrets
When the *Culloden* went aground,
And Troubridge, to his sorrow, found
He could no portion take
In his old shipmate's victory,
Though plainly all on board could see
The flashes of the guns
Sad was the fate and wrapped in gloom,
Which sent him to a watery tomb.
For neither he was seen,
Nor of the *Blenheim* e'er a word
By any passing sail was heard
"Twixt India and the Cape !
Cornwallis, too, is much renowned,
But for retreat—an ugly sound
To unaccustomed ears,
When with but five to twelve a front
He showed, and bore himself the brunt
Of France's hot pursuit.

And dropped astern to save the *Mars*,
On seeing which her grateful tars
Cornwallis hailed with cheers !
A score of years before that day.
With half his force la Mothe Picquet
He met successfully ;
And 'cross the *Ville-de-Paris* path
He threw himself, and braved her wrath
In Rodney's victory.
Till came the *Barfleur* to his aid.
And Hood his ship beside her laid
When struck the Count de Grasse.
Of Duckworth, Calder, Gambier, Strachan,
Though all had victory's laurels worn,
But little can be said.
For each a failure also met.
Which in the balance may be set
Against the battles won.*
And Saumarez had known defeat,
But turned the tables on the fleet
Inflicted it on him,
And under Jervis worsted Spain,
And Nelson at the Nile again
He helped to beat the French.
When badly wounded was Sir James,
Whose ship was nigh consumed by flames
Beside the *Orient* ;

* Sir John Duckworth was victorious at San Domingo, but failed in the Dardanelles. Sir Robert Calder, Jervis's flag-captain at St. Vincent, received a reprimand for not following up his success off Finisterre, three months before Trafalgar. Lord Gambier, who commanded at Copenhagen in 1807, showed incompetency at Cochrane's attack on the French fleet in Basque Roads ; and Sir Richard Strachan, who captured Dumanoir's squadron after Trafalgar, failed at Walcheren, which provoked Canning's well-known epigram.

And well he earned the coronet,
Conferred in payment of the debt
By England owed to those
Whose victories caused the war to cease,
And on the world conferred a peace
Which lasted forty years.

XI.

Our captains were a matchless band,
At home when fighting on the land
As on their element,
Or ships blockading in a port,
Or chasing, when their only thought
Was how to bring them to,
And once in close encounter locked,
These warriors, on the surges rocked
And cradled on the deep,
Ne'er quitted hold till they had struck
And lowered from peak and royal-truck
The foreign flag they bore,
And if o'er-hauled they happ'd to be
By greater force, they scorned to flee,
But fought the battle out.
Their number legion is, and best
Their brilliant deeds in war attest
A daring past belief,
And while a victory most could claim,
Some were who'd added to their fame
By exploits quite unique,
As ships-of-war of diverse sorts,
Or traders, cutting-out from ports,
Or storming batteries,
Or blocking coasts in wintry gales,
With "sprung" or "jury" masts, and sails
From bolt-ropes blown away.

The valour I've before portrayed
The Brisbanes, Hoste and Yeo displayed,
Who frigate squadrons led,
And Seymours, Cockburns, Milne, Riou,
With Owen, Lydiard, Moore, Pellew.

The Brentons and the rest,
Including Baker, Martin, Neale,
And Sydney Smith, to duty leal,

With Warren, commodore ;
While Stopford, Trollope, Parker, Cole,
Should be admitted on the roll

Of heroes of the sea ;
And Lambert, Corbet, Hardinge, Coombe,
Cooke, Shipley, Faulknor, all of whom

Their lives gave cheerfully.
Yet one, a relic of the war,
Some special mention claims, as o'er
A century he lived.

For Provo Wallis when a child
Might well a veteran be styled.

So oft he'd been engaged.
The year of grace was Eighteen Five
(And Nelson still remained alive

With Tráfalgår unwon),
When sailing in a Thirty-eight,
The *Cleopatra*, chance or fate

Across his pathway threw
The *Ville-de-Milan*, Forty-seven,
Of greater force in crew than even

Her armament implies.
Thus, Laurie's frigate being o'ermatched,
The foreigners a victory snatched,

One of the few they gained,
Though not till o'er the Frenchman's side
Lay main and mizen-masts, and died

Her captain, one Renaud.

While for our ship, upon the tide
 Her masts, both fore and main, beside
 The bowsprit, trailing lay,
 When, leaping down, the foe in hordes
 Soon cleared the *Cleopatra's* boards
 And struck the Union Jack,
 Although the *Poitiers*, Seventy-four,
 Which hove in sight, the Tricolour
 From both the frigates lowered.
 A "luff" when in his teens, we find
 Him in a craft of different kind,
 The *Curieux*, brig-of-war,
 Which but a year or so ago
 The boats' crews of the *Centaur* won,
 With Reynolds in command.
 The brig, which lay off Martinique,
 Some twenty miles they pulled to seek
 Where she lay snugly moored,
 And just as chimed the midnight hour
 The *Curieux* was in their power,
 Though not a bloodless prize,
 For Reynolds fell, though on his ear
 The sweetest music man can hear
 In quick *crescendo* broke,
 As first above the din a cheer
 Proclaimed to him, when death was near,
 That all was going well,
 And then a tempest of applause
 Made manifest that England's cause
 Had triumphed gloriously!
 Within a year upon the coast
 Of Guadaloupe the brig was lost,
 And to another prize
 Was Wallis ordered, named the *Gloire*,
 And at the capture of the *Loire*
 And *Seine* sustained a part.

And then lieutenant he became
On board a craft, whose well-known name
Will fire the patriot breast,
For o'er a smarter ship or crew
The British ensign never flew,
As no one will deny,
When we the *Shannon* specify,
The cynosure of every eye
And pride of England's fleet.
The *Chesapeake* her captain, Broke,
In barely fifteen minutes took
(As I've already told),
And after Watt was slain, and he
Was also wounded dangerously,
Young Wallis took command.
When eighty years (save one) had passed,
Inexorable death at last
With laggard footsteps claimed
The time-worn seaman for his own,*
The only centenarian known
Among our admirals.
Thus patriarchal were his days,
And with Sir Provo Wallis' praise
The press and country rang,
For great of stature, with a face
And form replete with manly grace,
He was a grand old man !

* Admiral Sir Provo Wallis was born on the 12th April, 1791, the ninth anniversary of Rodney's victory, and died on the 15th February, 1892, the day following the ninety-fifth anniversary of the battle of St. Vincent. It is also not a little remarkable that the action between the *Shannon* and *Chesapeake* took place on the nineteenth anniversary of Lord Howe's victory on the "Glorious First of June."

XII.

Our frigate captains, argus-eyed,
The hostile coasts who watched, espied
All craft unfailingly
From Cadiz port to Havre-de-Grace,
Who the endeavour made to pass
The cordon, troops to land
Either in Ireland or in Wales,
When our commanders, spite of gales
Which constantly prevailed,
To the blockaders warning gave,
Or else the menaced point to save
Followed in close pursuit.
'Mong these for gallantry and skill
Sir Sydney Smith a place will fill
Subordinate to none.
With strife resound old Acre's walls,
So storied in our Royal halls
From old Crusading days,
When sought the Saracens to stem
From Jaffa to Jerusalem
Our lion-hearted King,
Whose doughty deeds in Palestine
Romance and sober truth combine
In scarcely equal parts :
For though some valiant feats were wrought,
The Kings of every Christian Court,
With Richard, met repulse,
And to my mind the Saracen
Seems greater in comparison
With England's warrior Prince.
Where once the Moslem Saladin
Had victory vainly striven to win
'Gainst England's chivalry,

O'er crumbling wall and breach the sheen
Of Turkish bayonets was seen
And British boarding-pikes,
While cries of "Allah" sounded where
The Cross and Crescent waved in air
In friendly rivalry,
And in reply the British tar
In triumph raised the loud "Hurrah"
As backward fell the foe!
A seaman Smith was every inch,
And from no danger would he flinch
Where duty showed the way,
Although he paid a heavy toll
For his temerity of soul
When made a prisoner.
His ship disguised, for Brest he sailed,
And in the moorings coolly hailed
A Gallic Seventy-four,
And, having reconnoitred, steered
To join our fleet the coast which neared
In order to blockade.
But Smith at length "a Tartar" caught
When off Harfleur a brig he sought
To carry off as prize,
As from the Seine French luggers swarmed,
And, as the *Diamond* lay becalmed
And out of cannon-shot.
He was by numbers overborne,
And forced, so desperate and forlorn
His state, to strike his flag.
Two years he languished in a cell
Within the Temple's walls, and well
It would have been for France
Had Smith remained for life immured,
And thus to Buonaparte ensured
Fresh conquests in the East,

But he escaped from prison, with Wright,
And lived the tyrant and his might
At Acre to defy.
Here Wilmot, Smith, and Phelipeaux,
And Miller of the *Theseus*, so
Tenaciously held out,
That all attempts were beaten down
By storming parties made to crown
The crumbling walls and breach,
Though Kleber led and Marshal Lannes,
And Buonaparte inspired each man
To persevere and win.
Though three of these at Acre died,
With Djezzar Pasha by his side
The British commodore
The victor of Arcola taught
A lesson how to hold a fort
Against his choicest troops !

XIII.

'Mong Nelson's captains—valiant souls
And skilful, such as Nature doles
With niggard hand—the name
Of Miller stands among the first,
Whose breast, like his, the noble thirst
For fame alone inspired.
The day of sweet St. Valentine,
When Nelson broke the Spanish line,
Found Miller by his side,
And he it was who sprang on board
The great *San Josef* at the word
Of his immortal chief ;
And Miller by the *Theseus'* crew
Was so beloved, and Nelson, too,
Whose flag some time she bore,

That with a mutinous spirit rife
Throughout the fleet, no word of strife
Was heard on board the ship :
But they expressed their trust in both.
And said for them no man was loth
His life to sacrifice.
Then Santa Cruz saw Miller where
The fire was deadliest, and a share
He had at Aboukir,
But by a powder accident
Was lost the life so nobly spent
In making England great.
Now Berry comes, once senior "luff"
On board the *Agamemnon* ; rough
But ever ready, he
Was at St. Vincent first to spring
(The odds not e'en considering
When Nelson orders gave)
Into the starboard mizen-chains
As soon as lay the *Captain* Spain's
San Nicolas beside.
And quickly brought her ensign low,
And taught the ignorant Spanish foe
The lesson France had learned.
Then Berry, with a *sang froid* great,
Prepared to board the huge first-rate
Which lay beside the prize.
And aided Nelson with his hand
To reach the channels, thence to land
Upon the quarter-deck.
And never such audacity
Was seen before or since at sea.
And rarely such success !
With Nelson he at Aboukir
The glory claimed the ship to steer
That bore the hero's flag.

And also fought by Thompson's side
 When the *Leander* vainly tried
 To beat the *Généreux*,
 Though Berry had revenge complete
 When in the flagship of the fleet
 (*Foudroyant*, newly launched)
 He took the *Généreux* with Ball,
 When Admiral Perrée fell, and all
 The troops she had on board
 (Two thousand men), with stores of food
 Their hold of Malta to make good,
 Became Lord Nelson's prize.
 Again he took the *Guillaume Tell*,
 By brave Decrés defended well,
 The last of Brueys' fleet.
 And Tráfalgar he witnessed, too.
 And then at San Domingo flew
 His pennant finally.

XIV.

Next Bowen would we name, whose brief
 Career of glory Teneriffe
 Extinguished all too soon.
 Him Nelson thought among his best,
 And when he entered on his rest
 A tribute Bowen paid,
 And begged some monument or bust
 Might mark the spot where laid the dust
 Of his heroic friend.
 But, as he'd been of victory balked,
 Of precedent "My Lords" much talked,
 And Nelson prayed in vain.
 Conspicuous pluck did he display
 When Jervis won, with General Grey,
 The French West India isles,

And Bowen took the *Bienvenue*,
While Faulknor with the *Zebra's* crew
The batteries stormed on shore.
Of whom the admiral, Caldwell, said
That "never had our navy bred
A better man than he,"
While Nelson once O'Hara told,
"Than Bowen none 'ere lived more bold
In all the British fleet."
When he the *Mahonesa* chased,
From his *Terpsichore* in haste
She fled towards the shore,
But when his fire the Spaniard faced,
Of Bowen's metal she'd a taste
Not readily forgot.
Though stubbornly she fought until,
O'ercome by his superior skill.
Her crew their colours struck.
Before the ending of the year,
When Cadiz harbour sailing near.
He took the French *Vestale*,
A ship of much superior force,
Which ere surrendering had recourse,
Without avail, to flight.
And lost her captain 'mong the slain,
While all her masts, fore, mizen, main,
Were levelled with the deck.
The *bête noir* Bowen was of all.
And kept the Spaniard and the Gaul
For ever on the rack.
Until at Santa Cruz he died,
And perished by their captain's side
All of his cutter's crew.
Another comrade there as true.
Like Bowen bled—Fremantle, who
At Cadiz Nelson backed

When he engaged the Spanish barge,
 Although her size was twice as large
 As his, and thrice her crew.
 And Copenhagen saw him there
 When Nelson ships nor forts would spare,
 But took or silenced all ;
 And well Fremantle played his part
 And terror struck to every heart
 On board the *Trinidad*,
 Which, mastless and with tattered sail,
 Surrendered to the *Neptune's* hail
 The day of Tråfalgår.
 Then Thompson should not be forgot,
 Of the *Leander* chief, whose lot,
 Soon after Aboukir,
 It was a sad defeat to own.
 Though ne'er was greater valour shown
 Than in that desperate fight
 Against the *Genéreux*, when none
 Who victory's laurels e'en had won
 More honour gained than he.
 His pennant the *Bellona* flew
 (The same which took the *Courageux*)
 At Copenhagen's fall,
 When he again with Nelson bled.
 As erstwhile when the hero led
 At luckless Santa Cruz.

XV.

'Mong others should be mentioned here
 (Though little but their names appear)
 Are Darby, Peyton, Gould
 And Hallowell, whose deeds recall,
 With Westcott, who was slain, and Ball,
 The glories of the Nile :

And Louis, of the *Minotaur*,
And Mansfield, who the Seventy-four
Led on at Tråfalgår ;
And Duff and Cooke, who fell that day,
And King and Morris, good as they,
And Durham, Tyler, Hope,
With Hargood, Baynton, Rutherford,
And Codrington, who gave the word
In Navarino's Bay,
Where Briton, Gaul, and Russ he led,
And William's order. "Go it, Ned,"*
He faithfully obeyed.
The deeds of Foley next I chant.
The captain of the *Elephant*,
With Nelson's flag on board,
When Denmark found misplaced her trust,
And humbled to the very dust
Surrendered all her fleet :
And the *Goliath's* chief at Nile,
Where, standing on, in gallant style
He led the British fleet.
And laid the *Conquerant* beside,
Which struck when her commander died
With nearly half his men.
And we Riou might name, whose doom
In Denmark 'twas to die, for whom
His leader greatly mourned,
And spoke of him as "Good and brave,"
An honour would have robbed the grave
Of terror for Riou.
His frigate, named the *Amazon*,
Was led by Parker later on.
Who near the Western Isles

* King William the Fourth wrote to Sir Edward Codrington in these terms before Navarino. By the Ministry Navarino was described as "an untoward event," though the nation did not so consider it.

Made prize of France's ship, *Belle Poule*,
And China forced Britannia's rule

At sea to recognize.

One of a naval family,

He served beneath Lord Nelson's eye,

Who highly thought of him,

And Parker's name had gained applause

From earliest times in England's wars,

For three of captain's rank

In battle died, and other three

Fell victims to the greedy sea,

An Admiral one of these.

Nor Blackwood should be passed by us,

The captain of th' *Euryalus*,

The same at Tráfalgår

The *Victory's* deck with Nelson paced,

When bearing down the fire she faced

Of Villeneuve's serried line.

Who was the last to take his leave

And words of kind farewell receive

And press the admiral's hand.

But when the hero came to die

Who trained them all, his latest sigh

Was breathed in Hardy's ear,

Who had his parting kiss as seal

To love, which to inspire and feel

Was e'er a cherished thought.

In the *Minerve*, which Nelson led,

His praise he fully merited

When Spain's *Sabina* struck,

And Hardy at the Nile was seen

As captain of the brig *Mutine*,

While Copenhagen's fall

He witnessed as a volunteer

When the *St. George* was left in rear

With some of Parker's ships.

“ My band of brothers ” called he these
Companions of his victories
From Nile to Trâfalgar.
The words employed by strangest chance
That day King Harry routed France
At world-famed Agincourt.

XVI.

These heroes' deeds within St. Paul's.
Or Westminster's historic walls
Are durably inscribed,
Yet 'neath the marble few are laid,
Although they speak of honours paid
By costly cenotaphs,
For flows not anywhere the wave
But hides an ocean warrior's grave.
One who for England died.
No less to every sailor-man,
From powder-boy to veteran,
Our praise should we concede.
For as was said, “ More honour aft,
But seamanship in every craft
Is for'ard chiefly found,”—
An axiom Nelson oft would quote,
As one from Rathbone learnt afloat.
When serving in his ship :
And though approved in early days,
He had in later times no praise
Too high for officers
Whom he had trained beneath his eye,
Who led their men to victory
When he had left the scene.
In truth a matchless race they were,
And quarter-deck and fo'c'sle share
The honours equally !

Howe, Jervis, Duncan—of the sea
An e'er victorious trinity,
Each equal to the rest,
Like Anson, Hawke, and Boscawen—
The pride of place but yielded when
Came Nelson to the front.
Upon St. Vincent's day the first.
The waters of the Nile his thirst
For glory failed to sate,
And still the noble greed unslaked
Remained when Denmark rashly staked
Her crown and liberty,
And Gaul and Dane bewailed their fleet.
Which met destruction more complete
Than ever yet was known.
Like Tantalus, each sparkling draught
But parched his lips, and more he quaffed
As greater grew his thirst.
And while he drank of glory's bowl
Delirious joy suffused the soul
In that frail body pent!
Where fiercest rained the storm of shot.
Where thickest lay the ships, that spot
Was Nelson surely found;
And when had come life's closing day,
'Mid such surroundings passed away
The spirit long had chafed
In that weak tenement of clay.
Which genius, till it shattered lay,
Had made its chosen home.
How often had he raised the cry
Of "Westminster or Victory,"
When boarding with his men,
And now were op'd the portals wide
And Nelson on the flowing tide
Of glory drifted in,

Though not within the Abbey's walls,
But in the precincts of St. Paul's

 The hero found repose.

Can the revolving ages bring
A day like Nile, or poets sing

 A second Trâfalgâr,

Or can the womb of time one bear
Who may at all with him compare

 In all those qualities—

Skill, seamanship, and judgment rare,
With valour all to do and dare

 That prudence would permit,

And that electric sympathy,
Whose currents nerve all hearts to die

 For the beloved chief?

No ! fresh the laurels on thy brow
Shall be entwined for aye, and thou

 Without a peer remain !

The centuries may come and go,
Eternally may ebb and flow

 The tides on every shore,

The moon may wax and wane the same,
The sun may rise each day aflame

 And set at eventide,

But not again shall any land
A sailor's services command

 Thy equal on the sea !

Oh, mighty Nelson ! when the hour
Of battle strikes, may all the power

 That magic name evoked,

Regain its sway o'er every heart,
Strengthen each arm and nerve impart

 Throughout the British fleet !

CANTO IX.

HISTORIC LINE-OF-BATTLE-SHIPS—The *Victory*—*Téméraire*—*Bellerophon*—*Revenge*—*Triumph*—*Vanguard* and *Defence*—*Grafton*—*Repulse*—*Marlborough*, *Ramillies*, *Blenheim*, and *Namur*—*Dreadnaught*, *Isis*, and *Monarch*—*Foudroyant*—*Belleisle* and *Warspite*—*Liverpool*, *Dorsetshire*, *Norfolk*, *Devonshire*, and *Cornwall*—*Northumberland*, *Yarmouth*, *Kent*, and *Monmouth*—*Worcester*, *Cambridge*, and *Nottingham*—*Superb*—*Swiftsure*—*Defiance*—*Royal Sovereign*—*Britannia*—*Barfleur*—*Sanspareil* and *Queen*—*St. George* and *London*—*Edgar*—*Alfred* and *Robust*—*Captain* and *Culloden*—*Royal Oak*—*Mars* and *Hector*—*Achilles* and *Ajax*—*Agamemnon*—*Colossus*—*Cæsar* and *Centaur*—*Polyphemus*, *Hercules* and *Asia*—*Minotaur* and *Theseus*—*Tiger* and *Orion*—*Bellona* and *Lion*—The prizes *Implacable* and *Canopus*.

I.

AMONG the names of battle-ships
That rise unbidden to the lips
The *Victory* foremost stands.
And boasts a history in the past
Of battles won, of which the last.
Achieved at Trâfalgâr.
Remains the proudest on the roll.
When pealed her guns a funeral toll,
Proclaiming to the world
The *Victory's* closing scene of strife,
As well as of the hero's life
Whose flag she'd long displayed.
In her Howe, Keppel, Kempenfeldt
And Jervis, Hood, and Nelson dwelt.
And found as 'twere a home.
And Hardy, Drake, and Man she knew.
With Geary, Parker, Linzee, who
Their colours had on board.

And forty years her timbers heard
 Their voices as they gave the word.
 As sacred there as law.

II.

When Howard Philip's naval might
 From out the Channel drove in flight,
 And freed our native seas,
 The flag of Hawkins at the main
 A *Victory* bore, as haughty Spain
 Had ample cause to know,
 And under Blake her captain, Mann,
 Was ever found in battle's van
 When Tromp the Admiral pressed.
 La Hogue, where triumph crowned the day,
 A *Victory* saw, which led the way
 With Ashby's flag aloft ;
 And the *Britannia* (strange to say
 At Trâfalgâr beside her lay
 A ship which bore the name)
 The flag of Russell showed on high.
 With Rooke and Shovel sailing nigh.
 His Admirals Vice and Rear.
 As famous for its tragic fate
 No less than its achievements great.
 A *Victory* disappeared
 One stormy night off Alderney,
 When o'er one thousand men the sea
 Within its depths engulfed ;
 But when had passed a score of years*
 The name of *Victory* reappears
 In one at Chatham launched,

* Nelson's *Victory* was launched at Chatham Dockyard in 1765 (twenty-one years after the loss of Sir John Balchen's flagship), and just forty years before she fired her last shot at Trafalgar.

The same three-decker Nelson knew,
Which ere his day the colours flew
Of many an Admiral,
A ship renowned for speed afar,
And in the fleet most popular,
For Jack declared that she
Was launched beneath a lucky star,
And irresistible in war
Would therefore ever be.
With Keppel first her cannon spoke
The message, like a thunder stroke,
So oft repeated since,
When Count d'Orvilliers' flagship's fire,
Than her's (as e'er) directed higher,
Brought down her mizen-mast.
A loss that she by strangest chance
Incurred at Trâfalgâr, where France
The ship encountered last.
The next his flag on board to fly,
And meet the French successfully,
Was Admiral Kempenfeldt :
And had he stayed in her, instead
Of thence removing off Spithead
Into the *Royal George*.
We had not mourned a gallant crew,
Nor had the world been richer, too.
By Cowper's noble lines.
Gibraltar's long blockade she now
Took part in breaking under Howe,
The third relief and last.
And followed in the *Victory's* wake,
On battle's die prepared to stake
Their all, a gallant fleet
Of six-and-thirty ships of war.
Besides the transports with a store
Of food and all supplies.

Although against him were arrayed
Nigh fifty sail, the veteran stayed
To engage the enemy,
But they to fight were too afraid.
And melted 'neath the cannonade
Like icebergs in the sun.
Now Hood, less great than Howe, but still
A seaman whose achievements fill
An honourable page,
His flag displayed before Toulon
On board the battle-ship, and won
The Isle of Corsica,
Where landed she seven Thirty-two's
To arm the works ashore, with crews
To serve the batteries.
Her next flag-officer was Man,
And under him the *Victory* ran
Ahead of all the fleet,
And brought to action Martin's rear.
While Hotham's van was off Hyères,
A dozen miles astern,
When struck to her the French *Alcide*.
Though barren proved the gain indeed,
As she was lost by fire.
The flag of Jervis carried she
The day he won his victory
Beside St. Vincent's Cape,
And by this honoured ship we know
Of none that can a record show
So long and glorious ;
But yet a triumph could she claim
Which sheds a halo round her name
That time can never dim,
And British voices with acclaim
The *Victory* hailed when last she came
With bays of triumph crowned,

Though sorrow put aside the bowl,
 As sounded through the land the toll
 Of Nelson's funeral bell !
 For forty years she'd ploughed the seas,
 And numerous were the victories
 Achieved beneath her flag,
 But yet among her battles past
 Was none so glorious as the last
 Which closed her great career.
 And off the "Hard," the very spot
 Whence Nelson sailed, 'tis now her lot,
 So long as she endures,
 To rest in honourable ease,
 As one the battle and the breeze
 Had braved victoriously.
 That sacred shrine have youth and age
 Long made a place of pilgrimage,
 And viewed with quickening pulse
 The deck so oft he paced, the plank—
 Now marked "Here Nelson fell"—which drank
 The blood for England shed,
 And sadder still, the cockpit drear,
 Where fled the soul that knew no fear
 Or harboured any ill.

III.

Among the ships renowned at sea,
 Which fought beside the *Victory*
 That day at Trâfalgâr.
 Appears the "fighting *Téméraire*,"
 The British flagship's second there,
 With Harvey in command,
 Who, had he been permitted, would
 In line of battle first have stood.
 And passed the *Victory*.

When o'er the water loudly rang
A voice in Nelson's nasal twang,
Which bade him keep his place.
'Twas from his quarter-gallery
The Admiral, hailing, said that he
Would suffer none ahead,
Though Harvey none the less he loved
And his audacity approved,
So like what he had shown.
When, under Jervis, he, without
His leave, the *Captain* "put about"
To attack the *Trinidad*.
The *Téméraire* is widely known
To those who sympathy disown
With all pertains to war.
But lavish praise on Turner's art,
Which grace and majesty impart
To that dismantled hulk,
Bereft of power our shores to guard,
And towed to the ship-breaker's yard
By everyone forgot!
The ship which once, like mighty Jove
When launching thunderbolts above,
Was thought invincible.
With many others well deserved
To be as monuments preserved
In every British port,
Our youth the glorious past to teach,
And hearts all else had failed to reach
With love of country fire!
Again in fancy we recall
That memorable scene, when all
The great three-decker's guns
Breathed fire and slaughter on the foe,
And brought the *Fougueux's* colours low
And the *Redoubtable's*,

And now—as stands an oak has braved
 The wintry storms, though winds have raved
 Around for centuries,
 Or like some castellated keep,
 Unroofed and ruined on the steep
 From whence it awed the land—
 The artist's brush depicts the wreck
 Defiant still, as when on deck
 The dauntless Harvey stood
 And steered her in her venturous flight
 Into the thickest of the fight
 Beside his eager chief!

IV.

The name *Bellerophon* the lore
 Of Greek mythology with war
 Has e'er identified,
 As formerly our Lempriere,
 And now the modern Smith declare,
 And well all schoolboys know
 The legendary hero, who
 The Amazons o'ercame and slew
 Chimæra, monster dire.
 The *Billy Ruffian* (so our tars
 Pronounced the name), in England's wars
 Was ever foremost found,
 And fired, when serving under Howe,
 The opening shot the range to show
 Upon the "First of June,"
 And 'gainst the *Revolutionaire*,
 A three-decked ship, did Pasley dare
 To pit his Seventy-four,
 And lost his topmasts fore and main,
 With many of his seamen slain.
 And wounds himself received.

Again in action on the Nile
Her captain, Darby, fought awhile
The flagship *Orient*,
When fell her masts into the tide,
And wounded were on board, or died
One-third her complement ;
And she at Trâfalgàr engaged
Five allied sail, when round her raged
The battle furiously,
And Cooke was slain, and through the night
She tossed about in sorry plight
Till "jury-masts " were rigged,
But yet the old *Bellerophon*
The Seventy-four *Monarca* won,
And endless fame beside.
The ship, when Maitland's flag she flew,
Napoleon, flying from Waterloo,
Received as prisoner,
And sailed with him to Plymouth Sound,
When his first look of English ground
And last of France he took.
A new *Bellerophon* our rule
At Acre and Sebastopol
Upon the sea maintained,
And may the line eternal be.
And each be crowned with victory
As in the glorious past !

V.

In England's fleet among the best
In time of action stands confessed
The battle-ship *Revenge*,
Since Drake, as second-in-command,
On board her sighted off the land.
Not far from Plymouth Sound,

The vast Armada in its pride,
And Howard's ships from far and wide
Arrived to render aid.
Their admiral, Valdez, struck to her,
As all the chroniclers aver,
And when the Spanish fleet
Was headlong driven through Dover Strait
In panic and confusion great,
Be sure the old *Revenge*,
With Drake on board, was in the van,
And all, from boy to veteran,
Were sworn to keep the lead.
The tale is told by Tennyson,
How Grenville, who disdained to run
From any Spanish force,
His single ship 'gainst fifty-three
Defended long, till helplessly
She drifted on the tide,
And sank three sail, one drove ashore,
Although surrounded by a score.
Like vultures round their prey,
Whose boarding parties, every time
They sought her shattered sides to climb,
With slaughter were repelled.
With brave Sir Richard leading on,
They fought from three one day till shone
The sunlight in the next,
And when the cartridges were gone,
And hope of succour there was none,
The crew her colours struck,
For Grenville thought it dire disgrace
To cease the Spanish hordes to face.
Though wounded to the death ;
Yet they not long their own could call
The English ship and admiral.
For on the second day

He died on board and for the prize,
In mid Atlantic deep she lies
 With all her Spanish crew !
When passed a century or more,
A new *Revenge* our ensign bore
 With Hawke at Quiberon.
And well the bearer of the name
At Tráfalgàr sustained the fame
 Of Grenville and of Drake,
And, though a Seventy-four, she brought
To bay Gravina's ship, and taught
 The lesson, long forgot,
That even three-deckers were as naught
To stay her course when once she sought
 To pierce the Spanish line.
Again the *Valiant*, under Bligh,
She helped at Aix when signalled by
 The admiral aid to give
To Cochrane when the boom he broke,
And would have given the finishing stroke
 .Had Gambier backed him up.

VI.

Long told in tale or sung in song,
Whose glories to our land belong,
 The *Triumph* next appears,
Which first the Armada was to spy,
With flag of Frobisher on high
 As Admiral of the Rear,
When Fleming brought the startling news
That while off Scilly on a cruise,
 He'd witnessed their approach.*

* The *Triumph*, the largest ship in our fleet, was 1000 tons burden, and had a crew of 780 men, of whom 450 were seamen, 280 soldiers, and 50 gunners. The *Victory*, which was 200 tons less, had a com-

When Tromp with o'er one hundred sail
 'Gainst Blake endeavoured to prevail,
 Who had but thirty-seven,
 The *Triumph* closely was beset,
 But with two other vessels met

The fire of quite a score—
 The *Victory* and the *Vanguard* these,
 Both flagships in two victories.

The greatest ever known.
 The trio by their noble stand
 Deserved the plaudits of the land
 In that unequal fight,
 When Tromp completely worsted Blake,
 Who showed disaster failed to shake

His stubborn English will.
 And, though surrounded, lion-like,
 Disdained the *Triumph's* flag to strike.

But battling to the end,
 All his assailants put to flight,
 And, covered by the shades of night,
 Retreated into port.

As closely was the *Triumph* pressed,
 When Tromp a second time confessed

The ship invincible,
 Though o'er one hundred seamen died,
 And Ball was slain his chief beside.

Who met a grievous wound,
 And was compelled to stay ashore
 And leave the field of naval war
 To others for awhile.

plement of 500 all told ; the *Bonaventure*, of 600 tons, carried 300 men ; and the *Dreadnaught*, *Resolute*, and *Swiftsure*, of 400 tons, 250 hands. All these names, with that of the *Warspite*, called the *Warspeight*, still appear in the Navy List as battle-ships.

Again the *Triumph* nigh was burnt,
And Tromp and Witt a lesson learnt
From Lawson, Monk, and Penn,*
That though the wounded Blake was gone,
Our Navy boasted more than one
Almost as good as he !
When in the fight off Southwold Bay
Lord Sandwich fell, and hard the day
For England went at first.
Among the slain was Hannan, who
The Duke of York's approval drew.
So well he fought the ship,
And when a century had sped,
At Camperdown her captain bled
In battle with the Dutch.
In the retreat Cornwallis made.
With Gower in charge, astern she stayed,
Together with the *Mars*,
And though in battle seen in front,
No less the *Triumph* bore the brunt
When bringing up the rear :
Though under Calder, to the fore
The pennant she of Inman bore.
Who won the admiral's praise.
Thus since the days of Frobisher
The captains who had charge of her
Were quite among our best,
And to complete her many claims
She numbered Nelson's 'mong the names
Of those who'd served on board.

* In this action, fought on the 8th February, 1653, the *Speaker*, with Penn's flag, and the *Fairfax*, with Lawson's, were both within hail of Blake in the *Triumph*. Monk, at the commencement of the battle, was some miles astern in the *Vanguard*. The first action referred to took place on the previous 29th November.

VII.

The *Vanguard*—name as glorious e'en
As that the *Triumph* bore—is seen

The next to heave in sight,
And better captain Blake had none
In all the battles that he won.

Than Jordan of this ship,
As witness Tunis, Dover Straits,
Where twice propitious were the Fates,
As well as Southwold Bay.

Thus from the earliest times in van
The ship was found when upward ran

The signal to engage,
And as the name she bore implied,
Successfully the *Vanguard* vied

With others to be first,
And on her deck Lord Nelson stood
When at the Nile he shed his blood,

With Berry by his side.
The old *Defence* defiance breathed
When in the smoke of battle wreathed

That "Glorious First of June,"
And at the Nile, where not in vain
She on the *Peuple Souverain*

And *Franklin* poured her fire,
Till Brueys' squadron low was laid,
And Buonaparte with calmness said,

"To France there's no return."
Again at Tráfalgår no less

Was the *Defence* in readiness

Her *devoirs* to perform.
And with the *Berwick* shots exchanged,
And by the *Ildefonso* ranged
And lowered the Spanish flag.

VIII.

The *Grafton*, named from Charles's son,
In her career much honour won
And many battles saw.
Of which the first was Beachy Head.
Where by her namesake she was led.
The youthful Duke who fell
When fighting at the storm of Cork,
The year Dutch William made short work
Of James upon the Boyne.
La Hogue in van the *Grafton* found.
And Vigo also knew the sound
Of her resistless guns.
And equally Gibraltar saw
The *Grafton* 'mong our ships-of-war
What time it passed to us.
Malaga heard, in tones the same.
The ship our naval might proclaim,
When her commander died.
Whose well-known soubriquet had been
"The handsome captain of the Queen."
Sir Andrew Leake was one
Who, whether dancing at the ball
Or fighting in the van, of all
Was sure to be the first.
And now, though wounded mortally.
This comely gallant of the sea
Refused to go below,
But rested in an elbow chair
Upon the quarter-deck, and there
Remained to view the fight.
And orders gave to all around
While calmly waiting till his wound
Had ended fatally !

When fourteen years had fled, with Byng
 The *Grafton* led the weather wing,
 When Haddock had command,
 Who in the thick of battle steered,
 And Chacon's ship, *Asturias*, neared
 And forced at length to yield;
 And Stevens' flag she bore that day
 When Pocock fought with Count d'Aché
 Off Coromandel's coast,
 And in the line the *Grafton's* post
 Of all there was advanced the most,
 And closely she engaged
 The Gallic flagship *Zodiac*,
 Till Pocock came to the attack
 With others of his ships,
 And beat the *Vengeur*, Sixty-four,
 And tackled then the *Minotaur*,
 Which carried d'Aiguille's flag.
 So shattered was the *Grafton's* gear
 That Pocock left her in the rear
 Her rigging to refit,
 When Stevens sailed for Cuddalore,
 And soon his flag the *Norfolk* bore,
 And for the *Grafton* aid
 At Pondicherry's siege she gave,
 But nearly found a watery grave
 In that great hurricane
 When of our ships the crews of three
 Were hurried to etern't;
 And she dismasted lay.
 Now off Grenada, in the West,
 She proved herself 'mong Byron's best
 When he engaged d'Estaing,
 And helped Gibraltar's siege to raise,
 Where Rodney gave the *Grafton* praise,
 Which thence accompanied him

When he de Guichen sailed to seek,
And was engaged off Martinique,
Though indecisively.

IX.

A *Due Repulse* afloat was seen
What time Elizabeth was Queen,
And under Monson she
Was 'mong the first off Cadiz when
It fell to Raleigh and his men,
With all its treasure vast,
Who sailing thence for the Azores,
The Spanish flag upon its shores
Displaced for England's Jack.
The ship the *James's Queen* became,
But under Charles the First the name
Another one received,
And not till George the Second's reign
Was it, we find, revived again
When given the *Vestal's* prize;
Though she was lost in Seventy-five,
And of her crew no soul alive
Was left to tell the tale.
A new *Repulse* off Yarmouth town
(A twelve-gun cutter she) went down,
And so ill-omened seemed
The vessel's name, another yet
(A Sixty-four) off Ushant met
A fate the same as these.
A fourth *Repulse* had better luck,
And under Calder served when struck
Three ships of Villeneuve's fleet,
And in the Dardanelles again,
Whence Duckworth to return was fain,
Sustained the Turkish fire,

When one stone shot ten seamen slew,
 And wounded more, ere passing through
 The sides of the *Repulse*;
 Which next at Flushing lent a hand
 When Chatham led our troops on land
 And Admiral Strachan the fleet.
 Of all this lengthy line, the last
 Was launched but recently, and vast
 Are all her measurements,
 For fourteen thousand tons is she,
 And none is mightier on the sea
 Than this leviathan !

X.

The ships which bore from times of Anne
 The name of that great Englishman
 And of his victories,
 The proudest save those Wellington
 At Waterloo and elsewhere won,
 Took part in England's wars,
 And as the *Marlborough*, *Ramillies*
 And *Blenheim*, served in all of these
 And honour gained in each.
 The first to Matthews rendered aid,
 And by the Spanish flagship laid
 Until the wind fell light,
 When half a dozen closed around
 And Cornwall, her commander, found
 The *Marlborough* in a fix,
 And fighting fell, and by his side
 Two hundred wounded were or died,
 And she was left a wreck.
 When Rodney beat the Count de Grasse.
 Again she foremost was to pass
 Along the Gallic line,

As leading ship of Drake's division,
Which came the first into collision
With their's ere Hood approached ;
And on the "Glorious First of June,"
When Berkeley had command, full soon
Was in the battle's midst,
And fought two Seventy-fours alone,
And, though dismasted, captured one,
By name *l'Impetueux*.
The *Ramillies* did also well,
And Harvey, when his brother fell
(The *Brunswick's* chief was he).
Assisted her and took *l'Achille*,
Which lay a wreck from truck to keel,
With masts all overboard ;
But when she bore the flag of Byng,
The ship endured the unwonted sting
Inflicted by defeat,
And suffered what was worse, disgrace,
When Byng declined the French to face
And lost Minorca isle.
The *Blenheim*, on the other hand,
Had part, with Frederick in command,
In Cape St. Vincent's fight,
Though fated to a tragic end,
For under Troubridge, Nelson's friend,
Who led the fleet that day,
In Indian seas she strove in vain
To battle with the stormy main
And foundered bodily !
Namur was famed no less than they,
And victory crowned her every fray,
Except in Matthews' fight,
Whose flag she bore that luckless day,
And when off Pondicherry lay
Boscawen with his fleet,

The *Namur* never fought again,
 But foundered in a hurricane ;
 Though yet another one
 Assisted Strachan when Dumanoir,
 While flying in haste from Tràfalgàr.
 Encountered England's ships,
 And lost his own, in number four,
 When wounded were or perished o'er
 Seven hundred of his men.

XI.

The Navy List of ancient days
 The *Dreadnought's* honoured name displays,
 And likewise may be found
 The *Swiftsure*, *Ark*, and *Antelope*,
 And, smaller still, the *Swallow*, *Hope*,
 Some serving still afloat.
 When the Armada's mighty host
 Was first descried off Plymouth's coast,
 A *Dreadnought* foremost stood,
 And at the fall of Cadiz, too,
 Sir Conyers Clifford's pennant flew
 On board the battle-ship,
 Which, under Nelson, Frenchmen taught,
 As Spaniards oft with Drake, that "naught"
 Could "dread" in her inspire.
 The *Monarch* will precedence keep
 Among the rulers of the deep,
 A claim she justified
 When Duncan held command on board,
 Who sailed with Rodney to afford
 Gibraltar aid and stores,
 And hesitated not to meet
 Three ships of Count Langara's fleet
 At range of musket-shot,

And though the *Monarch* scarce could swim,
The *San Augustin* struck to him
And others felt his fire.
Again that memorable hour
When Camperdown broke Holland's power
Beyond recovery,
The *Monarch* well performed her share,
And thus with Duncan's closely were
Her fortunes intertwined,
And she, with Rodney's prize of yore,
The *Ardent* mastless was before
The hostile fire had ceased,
With hull shot-riddled and defaced,
While each had *hors-de-combat* placed
Above one-fourth her crew.
Again by strangest chance the pair
Among the greatest sufferers were
When Copenhagen fell,
And o'er two hundred was the loss
The *Monarch* had, whose captain, Mosse,
Was numbered with the slain,
While she no more the seas could stem,
Or wear the kingly diadem
Beseemed her Royal name.
The *Isis* many times in line
Of battle did her fire combine
With that of heavier ships,
And under Hughes, about a score
Of years ere this, much service saw,
When her commander fell ;
And proved to her traditions true,
Though losing o'er one-third her crew,
In Nelson's Baltic fight,
Whence she her course to England bent
When thither with the *Monarch* sent,
Where both were broken up.

But from her ashes. Phoenix-like,
Another *Monarch* rose to strike
Confusion on the foe,
As Alexandria's castled strand
And all the ports in Pharoah's land
Have recently confessed.

XII.

'Mong famous battle-ships was one,
Foudroyant, whose career outshone
In glory that of most,
Though with the French it first began
When Byng from Galissonnière ran,
Who had his flag on board.
Next year the *Monmouth* Gardiner led—
Byng's old flag-captain who, 'tis said,
Had registered a vow
That he'd the Frenchman take to task,
And quarter neither give nor ask,
But conquer her or die ;
And Gardiner tackled her, although
Some twenty cannon more the foe
Could bring to bear than he,
And had the *Monmouth* sought to fly,
None justly could have raised the cry
'Gainst him of cowardice.
It was a sanguinary fight,
And wounded were or slain outright
Above three hundred men,
'Mong whom the fiery Gardiner lay,
Who ere his spirit passed away,
Was hailed the conqueror.
And now aloft our ensign hung,
While 'neath its folds the English tongue,
Instead of French, was heard,

And roaring choruses were sung
Where formerly the timbers rung
 With ditties of Provence,
And oaths of Saxon origin
"Sacrés" succeeded now within
 The peopled wooden walls,
As faces of a tawny hue
Gave place to those with eyes of blue,
 And raven locks to fair.
The prize a famous ship became,
And under Jervis won a name,
 Who rose to be Sir John
For capturing the French *Pégase*,
And made the old *Foudroyant's* tars
 Renowned throughout the fleet,
To whom succeeded Duncan, brave
As he, who their *quietus* gave
 The Dutch at Camperdown.
In Ninety-eight on board a new
Foudroyant Nelson's colours flew,
 With Berry in command,*
And struck to her the *Généreux*,
Which from the Nile was one of two
 Effected their escape,
When off the coast of Malta she,
The *Lion* and *Penelope*,
 Cut off the Seventy-four.

XIII.

The first *Belleisle* of which we know
Was captured from the Count Thurot,
 Who lost his life as well;

* The second *Foudroyant*, launched forty years after the capture of Gardiner's prize, served in Sir John Warren's squadron in the Irish Sea, was the flagship of Lords Nelson and Keith, and received on board the dying Abercrombie, after his victory at Alexandria on the 20th March, 1801.

And still in England's fleet we find
A ship so-named to bring to mind
The memory of the deed.
And one, as *Formidable* known
Till made by Admiral Hood his own,
Took part in Tràfalgàr,
Where, though dismasted, still the Jack
She showed upon a pike, through lack
Of any other spar ;
And there, secured with lashings fast
Upon the stump of mizen-mast,
It flew throughout the day.
A line of *Warspites* can the name
And all its proud traditions claim
Since Tudor times when one
The flag of Raleigh in the van
Displayed as that brave gentleman
At Cadiz led the fleet,
And batteries silenced near the town,
And brought the Spanish colours down
From every masthead there.
Again a *Warspite* aided Blake
To turn into a British lake
The Mediterranean sea ;
And also Fairborne's pennant flew
When first the English Navy knew
The French as enemies,
(That is, since bluff King Harry's day),
And captured in Gibraltar Bay
Our earliest *Téméraire*,
And took the *Terrible* off Aix,
Whose name proud memories awakes
Of Hawke's great victory.

XIV.

It was the custom once to call
Our line-of-battle-ships from all
The shires and county towns,
And Conflans, l'Etendeur, la Clue,
With many such familiar grew
Which do not now appear ;
While to our seaports as a rule,
From Scarborough to Liverpool,
Our frigates owed their names.
Paul Jones, that noted buccaneer,
(His was indeed a name of fear)
The first compelled to strike,
Though for the victory paid he dear.
As Pearson sank the privateer
Just as they boarded him ;
And for the *Liverpool*, her boast*
'Twas on the so-called " Pirate Coast,"
Within the Persian Gulf,
The Arab corsair flag to lower
From every "bàghalah" and tower
From Muscat to Bushire,
And teach the lawless Wahabees
What Ormuz showed the Portuguese
Two hundred years before—
That England's fleet short work would make
Of rivals on that British lake,
As we considered it !

* The *Liverpool*, fifty, Commodore Collier, was flagship in the expedition of 1819, to Ras-ul-Khymah, as the *Chiffone*, Captain Wainwright, was in that of 1809. See the Author's "History of the Indian Navy" (2 Vols. Bentley) for a detailed account of these and all our other Eastern naval wars.

The *Dorsetshire* and *Norfolk* were
 Among the rest a noted pair,
 And to the former struck
 The *Raisonable*—Nelson's ship
 When first to sea he made a trip,
 With Suckling in command—
 While Pondicherry's leaguered lines.
 And all the Spanish Philippines,
 The *Norfolk* helped to win,
 Which carried Stevens' flag at one,
 And that of Cornish later on
 When fell Manilla town.
 At Portobello long ere this
 Success she won, but went amiss
 Off Carthage's fort.
 When Vernon's plans the Spaniards foiled,
 Or rather, their success was spoiled
 By Wentworth's jealousy.
 As famous was the *Devonshire*,
 Hawke's flagship, which the *Tonnant's* fire
 (Of eighty guns) withstood,
 Until the *Tilbury* interposed,
 And Rodney in the *Eagle* closed,
 With others in the rear,
 And she, before, off Finisterre,
 When Anson beat La Jonquière,
 Had carried Warren's flag.
 A former one destroyed had been,
 When caught alight her magazine
 As she with other ships—
 The *Ruby*, *Chester*, *Cumberland*—
 A brave but unavailing stand
 Against a dozen made,
 And only one was left of five
 In Kinsale Harbour to arrive,
 By name the *Royal Oak*.

The *Suffolk* Knowles, when Commodore,
Commanded off La Guayra's shore
And suffered a repulse,
But when the *Cornwall* led his fleet
Revenge he had for this defeat,
Though scarce decisively,
As Reggio managed thence to fly
And Knowles the fruits of victory
Then fully failed to reap.
The *Lion*, she and *Grafton* most
Were shattered off Grenada's coast
When Byron met d'Estaing,
And when to fall on Guichen's rear
Lord Rodney orders gave to "wear"
That day at Martinique,
The *Cornwall*, *Trident*, and the two
On which his flag and Rowley's flew,
The brunt of battle bore.

XV.

Northumberland to Gallic ears
A sound ill-omened ever bears,
Like the *Bellerophon* ;
For she on Britain's errand sped,
With Cockburn's flag at mizenmast-head,
To St. Helena's isle,
While from the last in Plymouth Sound
His single glimpse of English ground
The great Napoleon saw.
Yet chequered was the ship's career,
For one we lost when cruising near
The coast of Brittany,
Which, on the "First of June," when shone
Howe's genius brightly, was rewon
By Gardner of the *Queen*,

And witnessed San Domingo's fight,
When wounded fell or died outright
One hundred of her men.
The *Yarmouth* Saunders had for chief
(He who afforded Wolfe relief
When he besieged Quebec)
And struck the *Neptune* to her hail,
But not till every spar and sail
Her fire had shot away;
And also shared the *Kent* that day
In Hawke's great victory, though she may
Be proudest of the rôle
Her seamen played, by Watson lent
To Clive, who linked the name of *Kent*
With Plassey's famous field.
The *Yarmouth* also, under Brett,
Off Finisterre the example set
To Anson's other ships,
And when by Pocock Count d'Aché
From Indian seas was driven away.
His flag for years displayed.
The *Monmouth's* record few surpassed
In either present times or past
For battles fought and won.
As captain of the *Ramillies*,
Byng's flagship, Gardiner sailed the seas
And met defeat from France,
When uttered he a solemn oath
That he would be revenged on both
Her ship and admiral,
No matter when they met, or where,
Or foul the weather was, or fair,
Or what the time of year,
And any odds he said he'd dare
If he could but engage her there.
With others or alone,

And vowed he'd fight her to the death
As long as e'er he drew a breath
Or could the *Monmouth* swim !
And Gardiner well redeemed his bond
And Gallissonnière showed beyond
Dispute the *Monmouth's* power,
And ere he died upon her deck,
The French *Foudroyant*, then a wreck,
Submitted to her fire ;
When Carkett took command, the same
Who in the *Tarmouth* Rodney's blame
At Martinique incurred.
When he and Bateman showed a lack
Of pluck in failing to attack
The rear of Guichen's fleet.
With Hughes the *Monmouth* fought upon
The very day that Rodney won
His victory o'er de Grasse,
And battling on when hope was past,
Remained triumphant at the last
'Gainst three of Suffren's ships.
The *Bedford*, *Lancaster*, and she
All shared in Duncan's victory,
When struck the *Delft* to her,
Of which possession Bullen took,
But in the gale his prize forsook
As she was settling fast.
The *Worcester*, on the day that Monk
Nigh thirty sail destroyed or sunk,
Though overpowered, disdained
To yield or safety seek in flight,
But battled through the live-long night,
And foundered wrapt in flame !
The *York* and *Bristol* come to mind,
And all three capitals we find,
While of the county towns,

The *Oxford*, *Gloucester*, braved the breeze,
 And *Norwich* many victories,
 With *Winchester*, achieved :
 And still the fleet a *Cambridge* knows,
 Which oft-times foremost stood when blows
 Were freely bandied round,
 As witness Southwold Bay, when nigh
 The *Royal James*, which scorned to fly,
 Her captain, Holles, drew,
 And Sandwich gave devoted aid,
 Although the penalty he paid
 With life and half his crew.
 As greatly famed the *Nottingham*,
 When under Saumarez, became,
 Who died upon her deck,
 But took the Gallic *Magnanime*,
 Which sank the *Thésée* as abeam
 She lay at Quiberon,
 When Howe was in command, who gave
 His aid her drowning crew to save,
 And nearly shared their fate.
 The rivers—*Severn*, *Tyne*, and *Tees*,
 And *Shannon*, still more famed than these—
 Find namesakes in the fleet ;
 Though 'neath a foreign flag some passed,
 Among whom may the *Thames* be classed
 And *Avon*, though the first
 Our fleet recaptured, and the last,
 Soon after yielding, foundered fast,
 So shattered was her hull.

XVI.

Oft-times we find the old *Superb*
 Employed the Gallic pride to curb,
 And fighting in the East

Against de Suffren, under Hughes,
(Who gage of battle to refuse
Was never known) the ship
His flag in five encounters bore,
And lost three hundred men, or more
Than any in the fleet;
And she for long was led by Keats,
Who served against the allied fleets
With luck that never failed,
And under Saumarez was first
When from the "Rock" he sailed, athirst
To meet the enemy,
And wipe away the rankling stain
Inflicted when from France and Spain
His squadron met repulse.
Again with Duckworth's flag she led
The English fleet in line ahead
Off San Domingo's shore;
And on the day that Algiers fell,
And Exmouth sounded slavery's knell,
The old *Superb* was there,
And Captain Ekins shed his blood,
With nigh a hundred seamen good
As any England had.
The *Swiftsure* served afloat with Drake,
When he from Plymouth steered to break
The Armada's boasted power,
And when for Cadiz Howard sailed,
And o'er the Spanish fire prevailed,
With Raleigh leading on,
The ship was led by Captain Cross,
Who aided, though with heavy loss,
To silence all the works;
And witnessed she the Channel fight
When Berkeley, Admiral of the White,
Whose flag the *Swiftsure* bore,

Was fighting slain, who though but young.
(Not thirty years) by Monk among

His best was held to be.
Hard pressed on every side by foes,
And though in dissolution's throes.

He battled bravely on,
While fore and aft and either hand
The boarders swarmed, a desperate band,

O'er both the *Swiftsure's* sides,
And vainly Berkeley strove to check
Their onset on the quarter-deck,

Where, wounded sore, he stood.
Until amid the fire and wreck.
Pierced by a bullet through the neck.

Unyielding he expired !
The *Swiftsure*, as her name implies,
Unfailing is in fight, and flies

With speed upon the foe,
Which Hawke and Boscawen proved was true
When one defeated de la Clue,

And Conflans the other beat ;
While not a whit less Hallowell
The *Swiftsure's* qualities could tell

Were those of olden time,
When under Nelson at the Nile
She glory gained, like that erstwhile

With Robert Blake acquired.
That day a horror dire as new,
And equally unlooked-for, too.

The *Swiftsure* near o'erwhelmed,
When blazed the *Orient* to the sky,
And blowing up at length, well nigh

Involved the nearest ships,
And ceased awhile the cannon's sound
And reigned a stillness as profound

As that pervades the tomb,

Soon followed by the heavy splash
Of falling spars and gentle wash
Of ripples 'gainst the side!
The *Swiftsure* rocked upon the sea,
And owing to her proximity
Nigh shared the *Orient's* fate,
As fell a shower of burning brands,
Which to extinguish took all hands
Upon the upper deck.
But now a second time ill-luck
O'ertook the *Seventy-four*, which struck
To Ganteaume off Toulon,
And thus she twice a squadron faced,
But though o'ercome was not disgraced,
Until at Trâfalgâr
The *Swiftsure*, then a Gallic prize,
Assisted England's enemies,
Though she, ere battle ceased,
Returned to her allegiance.
While with *l'Achille*, which hailed from France,
Our *Swiftsure* was engaged.*
Her sister ship of Howard's day,
Defiance, nigh the *Swiftsure* lay,
With Durham in command,
And equally at Trâfalgâr
Her ancient prowess proved in war,
As when at Bantry Bay
The ship had Ashby's pennant flown,
And then at Beachy Head had shown
The flag of Torrington.
Her captain, Andrews, fell with Byng,
Than whom no better could the King
In all his navy boast.

* There was a *Swiftsure* in the British Fleet, as well as her recaptured namesake, one of the four prizes which, out of nineteen sail, were brought in safety to England.

Though ere his day, with Benbow brave,
 Another, like a craven slave,
 Refused to fire a shot,
 And Kirby sentenced was with Wade
 To die for cowardice, and paid
 With life the penalty.
 But Granville, her commander, well
 Her name retrieved, who fighting fell
 With Anson 'gainst the French.
 And from her Hawke had ready aid
 No less in battle than blockade
 While serving with his flag :
 And fiercely she " defiance " hurled
 When Copenhagen showed the world
 Our Nelson at his best.
 And bore that day the flag of Graves.
 And helped on land as o'er the waves
 To spread Britannia's rule.

XVII.

Our fleet a *Sovereign of the Seas*
 Has known for o'er three centuries.
 E'er since its infancy,
 And one with Blake her fame increased,
 (Though she the prefix *Royal* ceased
 To bear when Cromwell ruled),
 And when his ship was hardly pressed,
 Both friends and foes alike confessed
 She saved him from defeat :
 And under Rupert in the last
 Great battle of the war, surpassed
 All previous deeds she'd wrought,
 When Reeve died fighting 'neath our flag.
 The bravest seaman next to Spragge
 That England mourned that day.

With Torrington a foremost place
She held when standing face to face
 With Tourville's stronger fleet ;
And at La Hogue she bore at main
The flag of Ashby, and again
 Off Ushant that of Graves ;
And then Cornwallis' colours flew
When he as Admiral of the Blue
 A Gallic fleet repulsed.
But still the ship was at her best
What time at Collingwood's behest
 She led the lee division,
And showed the weather line the way,
And fired the opening shot that day
 When glorious Nelson fell.
The deeds of the *Britannia* show
Her never backward when the foe
 In hostile guise appeared,
As Frenchmen found off Beachy Head,
While at La Hogue our fleet she led
 With Russell's flag aloft,
When he de Tourville's ship attacked,
Though by four other Frenchmen backed,
 While Russell had but three.
She carried Hotham off Hyères
When Martin he encountered there.
 And then at Tráfalgàr,
When Nelson met his mortal wound
She with Carnegie's flag was found
 And Bullen in command.
Few ships have met with harder knocks
In storm and battle since the stocks
 She quitted for the sea,
Than that upon the navy books
As *Barfleur* bore since Admiral Rooke's
 Success o'er France and Spain,

When he and Hopson spread dismay
Throughout the fleet, in Vigo Bay
 Beneath the batteries moored,
And rich galleons, with ample store
Of treasure filled, and ships-of-war,
 Were prizes made or burnt.
Byng's flag the *Barfleur* also bore
When victory off Passaro o'er
 The Spaniards he achieved,
And that of Hood the ship displayed
When 'gainst him Rodney found arrayed
 The fleet of Count de Grasse,
And with a crowd of canvas set
She there the *Ville de Paris* met,
 Which yielded to her fire.
The *Barfleur's* admiral, Bowyer, bled,
When Collingwood as captain led
 Off Ushant, under Howe,
And aided she to break the line
The day of sweet St. Valentine,
 With Dacres in command,
And then in Bridport's action shared,
And Villeneuve's fire the *Barfleur* dared
 In Calder's victory.
The *Sanspareil*, it may be said.
Of all the prizes Howe had made
 Became the most renowned.
She crossed that day athwart the hawse
Of our three-decker, *Royal George*.
 And for her rashness paid
By losing mizen-mast and fore
And some three hundred men, or more
 Than half her complement,
And lowered her flag when day was done
To Admiral Hood and Elphinstone,
 Who led the *Glory* there.

XVIII.

Among the Ninety-eights the *Queen*
And *Neptune* much of war have seen,

And for the former one
With Keppel she her metal showed,
And on the "First of June" was towed

Dismasted from the fight,
And suffered more than all, but yet
The French *Jemappes* as prize she set
Against the loss incurred.

As for the *Neptune*—once a prize
In one of Hawke's great victories,

When she to Saunders struck,
(The captain of the *Farmouth* then),
And lost above two hundred men—

She gained at "Tràfalgàr"
Much glory when the *Trinidad*
Fremantle took, which Nelson had

Eight years before engaged,
And every breeze that blew at sea
The ocean god's supremacy

In strident tones proclaimed.
Another famous "Ninety-eight,"
St. George, saw Copenhagen's fate

In blood and ruin sealed,
Though Nelson's flag no longer flew
At fore-mast head, nor did her crew

In fight participate.
The mighty Blake a *George* had borne,
Who by disease and hardship worn,

Expired on board the ship,
Which carried then Sir Edward Spragge
What time he lowered the Corsair flag
Which Christendom defied,

And taught the lesson Blake had given,
That lived no navy under Heaven
 Could meet the English fleet,
And as *St. George*, as I have told,
She bore him when his life he sold,
 Though dearly, to the Dutch ;
While Solebay saw her captain, Pearce,
Die fighting in a battle fierce
 As any in the war.
Of equal force and fame no less,
A *London* since the times of Bess
 Our Navy List has known,
And one, which Lawson's colours bore,
Was burnt when lying at the Nore,
 When perished half her men ;
And struck to her an Eighty-four,
The French *Marengo*, when Linois,
 Returning from the East,
With *la Belle Poule* a refuge sought
In the Azores, a friendly port,
 When both were overhauled,
And while to Neale surrendered one,
The frigate to the *Amazon*,
 By Parker led, was prize.
Thus from the earliest times to this
The fame of our metropolis
 A *London* has upheld,
And Scotland's capital as well,
And Ireland's, can of battles tell,
 And Liffey, Thames, and Forth,
The port and streams, on which they lie,
No less are known for victory,
 Once chequered by defeat.

XIX.

An *Edgar* ever had the fleet,
And in our navy still we meet
That good old Saxon name.
The ship with Holland fought and Spain,
And in the Third King William's reign
Struck heavy blows at France,
When Shovel's flag in battle she
At Bantry Bay bore valiantly,
And then at Beachy Head.
With Kempenfeldt one also sailed
When from the Channel Guichen failed
To drive him into port,
And when the Danes our Nelson dared
And stood in readiness prepared
His challenge to accept,
The *Edgar* led the British van,
As through the line the signal ran
To weigh for the attack,
And heavy loss was hers, 'tis said,
And dyed were all her quarters red
With blood at set of sun !
Round Alfred, best of England's kings,
A nation's love with fervour clings,
And from the times of Drake
To those of Howe she won renown,
And gloriously has handed down
The patriot Monarch's name.
And so a word of praise I must
Accord her sister-ship, *Robust*,
Which Bridport's pennant flew
What time she served in Keppel's fleet.
And aided Howe the French to beat,
While under Thornborough,

And once again, in Ninety-eight,
 When she reduced to sinking state
 The *Hoche* off Donegal.
 Nor should the *Captain* be forgot,
 By Nelson led, who faltered not
 Upon St. Vincent's day
 When Jervis showed the battle-sign,
 But, unsupported, left the line
 To meet Cordova's fire,
 Thus singly baffling his design.
 Though England fewer ships by nine
 Then mustered for the fray.
 With Byng she met the fleet of Spain,
 When Castaneta sought in vain
 Our squadron to elude,
 And with the *Grafton* and the *Kent*,
 The *Captain* all her efforts bent
 The foe to annihilate ;
 And great was their success indeed,
 And Spain to terms of peace agreed
 And ceased to trouble more.
 So fought the first *Culloden* when
 With Admirals Hawke and Boscawen,
 And one since served with Howe,
 And under Jervis was engaged,
 Though Troubridge, like a lion caged,
 Saw only from afar
 The glorious battle of the Nile,
 As she lay grounded all the while
 Upon a neighbouring shoal.

XX.

An *Oak*, or *Royal Oak*, was known
 Ere Charles the Second made his own
 At Boscobel renowned,

And one by Tromp was captured when
The van, led on by Blake and Penn,

He sought to overwhelm,
Though later in the battle she,
With others lost in number three.

Reverted to the flag.
When Monk the power of Holland broke,
The day that Tromp was slain, the *Oak*
And *Worcester* both were burnt ;

But soon another bore her name,
Which earned off Lowestoft equal fame

In breaking Opdam's line,
Though she, when up the Medway laid.
Was fired what time de Ruyter made

His foray in the Thames.
The *Royal Oak* escaped a fate
As hapless at a later date,

When Edwards had command.
And was of five the only one
From Forbin's fleet of twelve to run
And port in safety reach ;

But she'd with Rodney better luck
Upon that April day when struck
To her the *Glorieux* ;

And as a ship of premier class
The *Royal Oak* now yields the pass
To none that sails the sea.

XX.

But classic names became the rage.
And gods and goddesses the stage
Of naval war engrossed ;
And with the names the ocean rang
Of warriors whom old Homer sang
In his immortal lay,

Of Greek or Trojan origin.
 Who sought upon the sea to win
 Renown as great as theirs.
 In that bright firmament of stars,
 Conspicuously the planet Mars
 Displayed her brilliancy,
 And he, the mighty God of War,
 Upon a British Seventy-four
 Conferred his high prestige.
 The first we had that bore the name
 A prize to Saumarez became
 After a desperate fight,—
 The same who in the following year
 In action fell off Finisterre
 Beneath the *Tonnant's* fire,
 And 'tis quite needless to refer
 To Hood and Duff commanding her,
 Whose fate I've sung before.
 The one *l'Hercule* in battle gained,
 And Duff undying fame attained
 The day that Nelson fell.
 And when he died no seaman's eye
 On board the battle-ship was dry,
 And equally 'twas said,
 That as the vessel's muffled bell
 Told mournfully his funeral knell.
 No one was there of all,
 Though to the melting mood unused,
 Who to the gallant Hood refused
 The tribute of a tear !
 Thus ever first, the *Mars* in rear
 Was only found that day when near
 A Gallic squadron drew
 To England's far inferior fleet.
 And forced Cornwallis to retreat.
 Though never admiral

A skill and boldness more complete
Displayed in midst of battle's heat
Than did the British chief,
Who, 'gainst the odds of one to three,
Repelled the foe successfully
And saved each lagging ship !
A worthy namesake Hector found,
Although upon less stable ground
Than Ilium's classic field,
And nobly she his fame upheld
At Louisburg, and also swelled
The list of Rodney's gains
That April day off Guadaloupe,
When, falcon-like, he made his swoop
Upon de Grasse's line.
And he on whom all schoolboys doat,
The Greek Achilles, found afloat
As brave a second self
When at Belleisle's surrender seen,
Or capturing the *Florentine*,
Of equal force with her,
When she was led by Barrington.
Who as an admiral glory won
With Byron 'gainst d'Estaing.
A French *Achille* had oft to yield
To ships their arms could better wield,
And Dursley took the first,
While Proby forced a second one
(The *Thunderer's* equal, gun for gun),
To lower the Gallic flag,
And for the third, which struck to Howe,
She was all eagerness to show
Her power at Trâfalgâr,
Where she again the *Thunderer* saw,
No longer hostile in the war,
But fighting by her side,

While King her namesake brought to book,
 And, though he bled, the *Berwick* took,
 A former British ship.
 The chief who laid great Hector low
 And forced the Trojan race to bow
 Before his conquering sword,
 The "Swift of Foot" still skims the deep,
 Or, labouring, climbs the billowy steep
 When ruffled by the storm.
 And vanquisher and victor now,
 As side by side they fight, but know
 A friendly rivalry.

XXI.

The Locrian Ajax, or the son
 (Still mightier) of King Telamon,
 Who never knew defeat,
 And, save Achilles, was the most
 Renowned of all the Grecian host,
 Who, when Ulysses won
 The hero's arms, with rage beside
 Himself, committed suicide.—
 Now sails the subject sea.
 And as he once the lightning's stroke
 Defied, so 'mid the cannon's smoke
 The ship the fire derides,
 Which 'gainst her Villeneuve brought to bear.
 When Calder led off Finisterre,
 And then at Trâfalgâr.
 A party from the *Ajax* sent
 (And from the *Cambrian* and the *Kent*)
 Ashore at Palamos.
 Defeat encountered under Fane,
 Who, *re infecta*, had again
 To re-embark his men,

Who sought a convoy at the Mole
To take in part or burn the whole,
But when on their return
They marched through streets their ships to reach,
Instead of going by the beach,
By soldiers they were met,
Who flocked in numbers to the town,
And lost two hundred seamen, mown
By shot, or captives made.
Mycenæ's monarch—who arrayed
The Grecian hosts in war, and played
The leading part at Troy—
His name the *Agamemnon* gave,
Which rules supreme upon the wave
As once he reigned on land,
And in comparison but tame
Appear the warrior's deeds and fame
Beside the battle-ship's.
Far mightier was Britannia's son,
Who in her deathless glory won,
Than even Mycenæ's King;
And England was prepared to own
The *Agamemnon* his renown
Maintained at Trâfalgâr
And San Domingo's fight, the last
Before the battle-ship was cast
A wreck on Plata's shore.
Again before Sebastopol
The ship proclaimed Britannia's rule
When bearing Lyons' flag,
And on the Black Sea's narrow space
No Muscovite dared show his face
Throughout the Russian war,
And she, though once with loss repelled
Before Fort Constantine, upheld
The honour of her name.

As Rhodes' Colossus anciently
 The port bestrode, so now the sea
 Its namesake rides supreme,
 And Jervis found her to the fore,
 And Bridport, too, off Ushant's shore,
 When each a victory gained,
 Although the ship at Trâfalgâr
 Essayed a part more arduous far
 Than e'er she played before,
 And all performances outdid
 When Spain's *Bahama*, at her bid,
 And France's *Swiftsure*, struck,
 And, mastless and a derelict,
 Great chastisement did she inflict
 On all her enemies !
 As when a lion, driven to bay,
 The hunter rends who seeks to slay
 Him sheltering in his lair,
 So now with every fiery breath
 The old *Colossus* sudden death
 And havoc launched around,
 And those expecting to despoil,
 Discovered her prepared to foil
 The attempts each made in turn.
 'Twas nobly done, ye dauntless crew !
 To Nelson's dying wishes true,
 And in degree no less
 To Morris are our praises due,
 Who on that day his pennant flew
 On board the battle-ship.

XXII.

The mighty men of Greece and Troy
 Quite the monopoly enjoy
 Of naming ships-of-war,

But well a *Cæsar* held her own
When Saumarez before the town
Of Algeciras failed,
Although revenge he had in full
And re-imposed our Navy's rule
As firmly as before :
While under Strachan with other three—
Namur, Courageux, Hero—she
An equal force o'ercame.
Ere this a Seventy-four so-named
The fame of Rodney loud acclaimed
As prize from Count de Grasse,
Whose colours to the mast were nailed,
And though on either side assailed,
The *Cæsar* scorned to yield
Till she became a helpless wreck,
And lay her captain dead on deck
With over half his men.
But, sad to say, that very night
The brave survivors of the fight
A dreadful end o'ertook.
For scarce the *Cæsar's* guns were cold,
When flames, extending to the hold,
Involved the magazine,
And almost ere their fire was stilled,
The crew who'd fought so well were killed,
And not a soul survived !
The *Centaur*, under Inglefield,
The most achieved to make her yield—
The same to Boscawen
Surrendered when he beat la Clue,
When fell one-third the Frenchman's crew,
Besides their gallant chief—
And of the prizes in her charge
But two escaped, and, save the barge,
Of all the *Centaur's* boats

Not one survived the hurricane,
 To weather which had striven in vain
 So many battle-ships.
 But truth necessitates to say
 A British *Cæsar* fell away
 From all the name implies,
 And Howe to trial her captain brought,
 Who was by sentence of the court
 Dismissed from his command.
 Old Polyphemus—who espied
 (As Virgil says), though single-eyed,
 Ulysses in his cave—
 Now as a British man-of-war
 'Mong many other triumphs saw
 The day of Tråfalgår ;
 And he of all mankind most brave,
 Great Hercules, his namesake gave
 The task of equalling
 His “labours” twelve upon the wave.
 From that Mycenæ's land to save
 When he the lion slew,
 Unto the last, in which he tore
 From gloomy Hades' very door
 Its watch-dog, Cerberus.

XXIII.

At Navarin's “event untoward,”
 When England, France, and Russia lowered
 The Turkish flag in Greece,
 The *Asia*, under Codrington,
 Great glory with the *Albion* won,
 Which at Sebastopol
 Engaged the Power our ally then,
 And forts attacked and landed men.
 Led on by Lushington.

Afloat the fabled *Minotaur*
The thunders of Britannia bore,
And long the monster's name,
Which once had been the dread of Crete,
Became the terror of the fleet
Of England's enemies,
And triumphs oft her records swell.
As Aboukir and others tell,
Although the *Minotaur*
Missed Trâfalgar by accident,
As she was to Gibraltar sent
Three weeks or so before.
Upon the Tiber's classic flood
Her seamen rowed, and victors stood
Within the walls of Rome,
And proud for England was the hour
When flew her ensign from the tower
Of Fort St. Angelo,
Although our stay was only short,
As soon the land Napoleon brought
Beneath his iron sway.
The *Dædalus*—whom Ovid sings,
Who flew with wax-cemented wings
Across the Ægean Sea,
And helped Pasiphæe, the frail,
In her amours (so goes the tale)—
Now bears the Union Jack,
With Minos who (of Crete the king)
Was not ashamed of harbouring
The offspring of his queen.
And Theseus too—who won the love
Of Ariadne, fair above
All others of her sex,
But from her side at Naxos strayed,
And left the nymph he had betrayed
Her folly to bewail—

Transformed into a Seventy-four,
 For many years the pennant bore
 Of Miller, Nelson's friend,
 Whose flag at Santa Cruz was shown
 On board her when in vain the town
 The hero sought to take ;
 And Aboukir the *Theseus* saw,
 Which gallantly with Smith before
 The walls of Acre served,
 But there, at length, she came to grief,
 And by gunpowder lost her chief,
 With forty of her crew.
 A *Tiger* from the Navy List
 Since Tudor times has ne'er been missed,
 And she was foremost seen
 With Howard, Lord of Effingham,
 And Raleigh, when these worthies came
 To Cadiz with the fleet ;
 And Holland also knew her might.
 When as a frigate "taunt and tight"
 The little *Tiger* met
 The *Schaerlaes*, then in Cadiz Bay,
 To which, as she at anchor lay,
 A challenge Harman sent.
 Out to the offing went the pair,
 And in a deadly duel there
 Engaged one summer morn.
 And having shot her masts o'erboard,
 The *Tiger's* captain drew his sword,
 And calling up his men,
 Was quickly o'er the *Schaerlaes'* side,
 Though not till seven score men had died
 Stood he triumphant there.
 In India fame the ship attained,
 And not a few successes gained
 When bearing Watson's flag ;

And later carried Pocock's own,
When with the *Kent* he battered down
 The walls of Chand'nagore ;
And twice engaged the Count d'Aché,
Though undecided went the day
 Each time for England's cause.
Renowned no less, *le Tigre* remains,—
By Bridport reckoned 'mong his gains
 When fighting with the French,—
The same at Acre Commodore
Sir Sydney Smith's broad pennant bore
 When he Napoleon beat.
Orion, of gigantic mould,
Of whom the ancients legends told
 Surpassing all belief.
His metal under Howe displayed
What time his namesake Duckworth laid
 Beside the Gallic prize,
Northumberland, and one more bold
Than Duckworth could a tale unfold
 Of well-won victory,
For Saumarez his skilfulness
With Bridport first, and then no less
 With Admiral Jervis, showed,
When on the three-decked *Salvador*
Continued he her fire to pour
 Until the Spaniard struck,
And passing on, a share he had
In silencing the *Trinidad*,
 Which bore Cordova's flag.
Orion then at Aboukir
Was 'mong the foremost to appear.
 Still led by Saumarez,
Who was displaced at Trâfalgâr
By Codrington, who, when he saw
 The *Africa* in straits,

Bore down to render Digby aid,
 And *l'Intrepide*, her foeman, made
 Her colours lower to him.
 Bellona—goddess once of War,
 Who e'er prepared for Mars his car
 When going forth to fight—
 At Copenhagen cracked her whip.*
 And all the dogs of war let slip
 There straining at the leash,
 When Nelson humbled Denmark's Crown
 And forced her fleet and chiefest town
 To own Britannia's might.
 She brought to heel the *Courageux*,
 When gallant Faulknor's pennant flew
 On board the *Seventy-four*,
 Which sailed from Lisbon's rock to chase
 Some ships that Faulknor's feared to face,
 And on o'erhauling her
 The captain cast aside his coat,
 And stood a mark for all afloat
 On board the *Courageux*,
 Where Lambert fell, who yielding scorned,
 Whom Frenchmen as their bravest mourned,
 With o'er two hundred men.†
 When on the old *Bellona's* lee
 The *Courageux* was seen to be,
 Dismasted and in tow,
 In thousands trooped the Portuguese
 The victors o'er their enemies
 To welcome with acclaim,

* Bellona is represented by the ancients as bearing a whip to animate the combatants, and a flaming torch.

† Commodore Johnstone, commanding the British squadron at Lisbon, says :—"The *Seventy-four* was commanded by Monsieur Lambert esteemed the best officer in France."

And issued forth the Court and King
In triumph Faulknor home to bring
And feast him royally.
The *Lion* was of old well known,
And round her name a crop has grown
Of legendary deeds,
For she at Cadiz bore a part
When Raleigh made each Spanish heart
With helpless terror quake
As he the shipping set alight,
And well the *Lion* showed in fight
With Southwell in command.
When sought the Jacobites to raise
The rebel standard in the days
Of 'Forty-five, before
The Highlanders were forced to yield
Upon Culloden's bloody field
To "Butcher Cumberland,"
The "Young Pretender" made his plans
And sailed to join the Scottish clans
Who rallied to his flag;
But off the coast the *Lion* met,
Commanded by Sir Piercy Brett,
And while he fled away,
The *Lion* fought unto the death
His escort, the *Elizabeth*,
Of greater force than she,
Until both ships became a wreck,
With dead and dying heaped on deck,
And parted company.
A *Lion*, Dixon in command,
Engaged four frigates off the land,
Near Cadiz, taking one,
And served the *Guillaume Tell* the same,
When she from France to Malta came
To reinforce the isle;

And over fifty years before,
When, under Scott, the *Lion's* roar
 Resounded o'er the sea,
When Hawke beat France off Finisterre,
And half a dozen vessels there
 Made prizes out of eight.
Among the captures made by Strachan
Was one which, time and battle-worn,
 Could lately still be seen.
And long as the *Implacable*
She fought 'gainst England's foes as well
 As once 'gainst those of France.
Her boats, by some few others backed,
Eight Russian ships-of-war attacked,
 Which lay securely moored
Beside some forts off Hango Head.
When our brave tars, by Hankey led,
 The whole flotilla took,
Though 'mong the slain, alas ! was one,
The leader there, whose death alone
 Made victory dear indeed.
"Push on, my lads," his orders were,
His dying thoughts and only care
 His duty to fulfil.
And well they followed him to death,
As Hankey with his latest breath
 Was proud to testify.
At sight of her what thoughts revive
Of days when Nelson was alive
 And Trâfalgâr unwon,
Ere Dumanoir fled thence away,
But only on the track to stray
 Of Strachan off Finisterre.
Well can we conjure up the scene,
When all her decks the guns between
 Were filled with fighting men,

Among the bravest France possessed,
Of whom two hundred found a rest
Eternal on that day,
And languished those who lived for years
In British hulks, with hopes and fears
For freedom ever racked,
While she the orders of command,
In language foreign to the land
That gave her birth received,
And proved to England's Jack as true
As to the flag her Gallic crew
Had fought for long ago.
Ere Tráfalgàr's disastrous close
The *Implacable* had bandied blows
With Nelson's *Victory*.
And now she's seen at Devonport,*
While Portsmouth boasts the ship she fought
That memorable day,
And thus alike the friend and foe,
The victor and the vanquished, know
An end to all their strife.
There still survives another prize,
Which, though she now neglected lies,
Reminds us of the Nile,
And *Franklin* rises to the lips.
The name of one of Brueys' ships
Which three of ours attacked,
Though through the night she battled on,
With all her masts and bowsprit gone
And more than half her crew!
Canopus named from Nilus' flood,
Her baptism of fire and blood
With Duckworth she received.

* The *Foudroyant*, *Canopus* (late *Franklin*), and *Implacable* (late *Duguay-Trouin*)—so intimately associated with Nelson, one as his flagship and the others as witnesses of the Nile and Trafalgar—could be seen in a dismantled state at Devonport, when these lines were written.

And leading on the weather line,
Made San Domingo's name a sign
For her of victory.
And one which fought in Ninety-four
(*Tremendous* was the name she bore)
Still floats upon the brine.
Though in the *Grampus* none could know
The Seventy-four which, under Howe,
With Pigott leading her,
In battle made so brave a show,
But is permitted here to go
The way of all the rest !
'Tis passing strange for us to think—
Now standing on the very brink
Of nineteen hundred years—
That still exist a few of these
Memorials of the victories
Of Nelson, Howe, and Strachan,
Around whom cling proud memories,
Which at the sight of them arise
In even the dullest breast.
Quite bootless now for England's need,
Though such may soon arise, indeed,
These ships neglected lie,
Which bore her thunder on the main,
Though now, alas ! it seems in vain
Our sympathy to win.
And so, dismantled, in the ooze,
With naught save dignity to lose,
Which none can take away,
These hulks remain forgotten there,
" My Lords " vouchsafing neither care
Nor passing thought for them !

CANTO X.

FAMOUS FRIGATES :—*Phœnix*—*Antelope*—*Arethusa*—*Amazon*—*Amphion*—*Active*—*Volage*—*Diomedæ* and *Ceres*—*Proserpine* and *Flora*—*Narcissus*—*Nereid*, *Sirius*, *Magicienne*, *Iphigenia*, and *Africaine*—*Ethalion*, *Fisgard*, and *Melampus*—*Phœbe*, *Latona*, and *Alcmene*—*Jupiter* and *Juno*—*Isis*, *Thetis*, and *Doris*—*Galatea* and *Astræa*—*Dido* and *Actæon*—*Hydra*, *Aurora*, *Phaeton*, and *Memnon*—*Cerberus*—*Andromeda*, *Perseus*, and *Medusa*—*Diana* and *Apollo*—*Endymion*—*Hippomanes*, *Comus*, *Harpy*, and *Triton*—*Melpomene*, *Terpsichore*, and *Calliope*—*Venus* and *Cyclops*—*Pallas*, *Minerva*, and *Æolus*—*Calypso* and *Penelope*—*Castor*, *Psyche*, and *Cleopatra*—*Prometheus*, *Pandora*, and *Vulcan*—*Circe* and *Boreas*—*Leda* and *Hermione*—*Orestes*, *Jason*, and *Medea*—Some Noted Bomb and Fire-ships—*Mercury*, *Iris*, and *Hermes*—*Pelorus* and *Pegasus*—*Saturn*, *Orlando*, and *Hebe*—*Granicus* and *Hebrus*—*Eurotas* and *Spartan*—*Arachne* and *Sybille*—*Icarus*, *Dædalus*, and *Megæra*—*Euryalus* and *Andromache*—*Sappho* and *Leander*—*Pandora* and *Niobe*—*Alcestis*, *Argo*, and *Ariadne*—*Orpheus*—*The Victory* under way : a Sketch—Conclusion.

I.

Among the craft unnamed by me
For countless acts of gallantry
Stand frigates first of all,
Whose forms appear the sea to swim
As flying-fish its surface skim
In swift aerial flight,
And famous are some cruisers' names
As not a few of those whose claims
Have just been recognised—

The fine three-decker Ruskin thought
 An object beautiful as aught
 The work of human hands.*
 The *Phoenix*—fabled bird of song,
 Which from its ashes rose as strong
 As in its early prime—
 Comes first in this my brief survey,
 As since the great Armada's day
 Our Navy one has owned.
 She served with Blake at Tunis port
 When he the Dey to reason brought,
 With shot for arguments,
 And honour, though with loss, she gained,
 And all her glorious past sustained
 With unabated force,
 When Bodley's frigates, numbering four,
 Van Galen's ten off Elba's shore
 One day she chanced to meet.
 Her crew, when boarding o'er the side,
 Astern were taken by a tide
 Of Dutchmen unawares,
 Though not for long was she a prize.
 As Bodley took her by surprise
 While moored in Leghorn Roads,

* Mr. Ruskin, writing, in 1856, in his "Harbours of England," of the impression created in his mind by the sight of a line-of-battle-ship, says: "One thing this century will in after ages be considered to have done in a splendid manner, and one thing only. It will always be said of us with unabated reverence, 'They built ships-of-the-line, which, take it all in all, is the most honourable thing that man, as a gregarious animal, has ever produced.' Into it he has put just as much of his human patience, forethought, experimental philosophy, habits of order and obedience, thoroughly wrought handiwork, defiance of brute elements and other qualities as can well be put into a space of 300 feet by 60 broad. I am thankful to have lived in an age when I could see this thing so done."

When Tromp the younger, who'd command,
Jumped overboard and swam to land,
On finding all was lost.
A *Phoenix* on the Cuban coast
In a great hurricane was lost,
Although the time was brief
Before another one arose,
Which, like her namesake, England's foes
Confounded utterly.
She fought the *Didon* with a will,
And, though she fled, engaged her till
She struck to Baker's hail,
Who was of all the first to sight
The squadron flying from the might
Of Nelson's conquering fleet—
When from the bay of Tráfalgar
The remnant, under Dumanoir,
Their course for Rochefort steered—
And signalled to Sir Richard Strachan,
Who "brought them to " the following morn
And captured every one !
Her consort of Armada days,
The old *Revenge*, and she amaze
Struck in each Moslem breast,
When by the fire of Stopford's fleet
The forts of Acre met defeat
And crumbled to the dust ;
And twice a *Phoenix* captured we
When France and Spain in company
'Gainst England warred—the first
By Pocock off Havannah's shore,
And Rodney, when of food a store
He landed on the " Rock,"
The second took, a *Se enty-four*,
Which Count Langara's colours bore,
The Spanish Admiral he.

'Mong Howard's frigates were the *Hope*,
The *Rainbow*, and the *Antelope*,

And of the three the last
When "standing on and off" Toulon,
Espied the Gallic *Aquilon*.

And drove her high ashore,
And under Howe the frigate saw
The earliest battle of the war,

That on "the First of June."
'Mong ships to Cadiz port to steer
We find the *Rainbow*, led by Vere
(Sir Philip of that ilk).

Who showed what he could do and dare
When Raleigh set the fleet aflare
And Essex stormed the forts.

II.

The "saucy *Arethusa*," long
In history famed and hymned in song

As Victory's favourite child,
When sailing on a Channel cruise,
And led by one of the Pellews,

Not far from Guernsey isle—
With other British frigates four,
By Warren led as Commodore—

A Gallic squadron spied,
And one of them, which rashly crossed
Her path, the *Arethusa* forced

To lower the Tricolour.
Then to a Spaniard, called *Pomone*,
Her captain, Brisbane, made it known

Before he opened fire
That she must either strike or sink,
And brief the time was given to think
Ere he enforced his hail :

And when the Dons made answer "No!"
Brave Brisbane in an hour or so
For quarter made them call,
And soon she was astern in tow,
And thus they saved the useless flow
Of precious Spanish blood.
As speedily at Curaçoa
The *Arethusa* showed the foe
Her skill in gunnery,
When with three other men-of-war
The ships in port and forts ashore
She captured in a trice,
For though their force was three-fold higher,
They lacked the indomitable fire
That signalised our men;
And Brisbane was of Benbow's sort,
Who nothing reckoned worth a thought
Save fighting under Heaven!
The nymph by Alpheus once pursued
(As Ovid says), her youth renewed
In quite another guise,
And she, who fled o'er plain and mount
Till changed by Dian to a fount,
When to a ship transformèd,
Acquired the men-of-war by arms,
As formerly her maiden charms
The love of Alpheus won.
And many others could I name
Of whom the story is the same,
Unchequered by defeat,
As *Amazon*, which by Riou
(Whom Nelson called "the good and true")
Was led that glorious day
When Denmark's forts upon the brine,
And battle-ships, in number nine,
Were yielded up to him.

And when Riou in battle died,
She had for captain one as tried
 In him who glory won
As captor of the French *Belle Poule*—
Brave Parker—who made England's rule
 In China's seas supreme.
As fierce as any martial dame
Of ancient times that bore the name,
 In naval war appears
This ship of Amazonian fame,
And long may we a cruiser claim
 In battle bold as she !
Amphion—tuneful with the lyre,
Whose strains did once the stones inspire
 And built the Theban walls—
Afloat the pennant flew of Hoste
When he off Lissa's shore could boast
 A brilliant victory,
First capturing the frigate *Flore*
In half an hour or little more,
 And turning then his fire
Upon a second, named *Bellone*,
Which also struck to him alone
 After a stubborn fight.
Sad was the fate off Portsmouth Hard
Her predecessor, most ill-starred
 Of all *Amphions*, met,
When as she lay prepared for sea
And "all a-taunto," suddenly
 Her magazine blew up,
And perished nearly all her crew
With friends who came to bid adieu
 (Above three hundred souls)
And every officer save two—
The first lieutenant and Pellew,
 The captain of the ship.

Another of *Amphion's* name
A fate in all respects the same
On Spain's *Mercedes* brought,
When Hammond, Sutton, Moore, and Gore,
Who held command on board of four
Of England's smartest ships,
As many Spaniards met, with gold,
And hailing them, their captains told,
With but scant courtesy,
That they must yield the bullion, or
The consequences bear, though war
Had not been yet declared,
And then with little more ado,
With cannon-shot they brought them to
And captured all the four! *
At Lissa, ere the day was done,
Our *Active* the *Corona* won,
And later the *Pomone*,
And she has since most active been.
And service in Ashantee seen
And in the Zulu War.
The *Volage*, too, was one of those
Which fought with Hoste 'gainst England's foes,
With Hornby in command,
And had a part in Aden's fall,
And Canton's also can recall
Within a year or so.
A British frigate fair to see
Was that by name the *Niobe*,
Amphion's spouse of old,
Which sailed in company with her lord,
Who loved the sound of clashing sword
And music of the guns

* This action, which resulted in the capture or destruction of the Spanish squadron, took place on the 5th October, 1804, and was the *casus belli* with Spain.

Far more than that sweet harmony
Which moved the very stones when he
The Theban city raised.

III.

Fair *Diomed*—Achilles' bride
When Agamemnon from his side
The lovely Briseis snatched—
Was present as a "Forty-four,"
When Rainier early in the war
With Stuart took Ceylon,
And once a battle-ship, in name
Alike, to Duckworth prize became
Off San Domingo's shore :
While famous as the *Diomed*
Is *Ceres*, who of old the seed
Of corn as emblem bore.
The Queen of Hades, *Proserpine*,
And *Flora* 'mong the frigates shine,
Although the former once
Had flown the Gallic Tricolour
Till by the *Dryad* made to lower
The flag with heavy loss,
While *Flora's* boats a brig cut out,
And landed men who put to rout
Some soldiers giving aid.
Narcissus' story, Ovid tells,
Whose image in the floweret dwells,
And thus the record runs :—
In Thespis' fount the beauteous youth
His face beheld, of which, forsooth,
Enamoured he became.
And when his efforts were as naught
The shadow to embrace, distraught
With unrequited love,

The swain committed suicide,
When from his blood the flower beside
The fountain upward sprung.
A frigate now, her crew, intent
On warlike deeds, less sentiment
Than Ovid's hero showed,
And wrought a deed in Hyères Bay
That few, it may be said, but they
Would have attempted even,
For having marked a French settee,
Which, lulled in false security,
Beneath the batteries lay,
The frigate's boats alongside rowed,
And though by shot their ranks were mowed
They bore her off to sea !
But yet although our seamen bled.
In the " Gazette " none ever read
Of special honour paid
To these stout warriors of the main,
Who, placed beside a love-sick swain,
Were worth a thousand such !
Yet once the star of victory paled,
And signally our frigates failed,
Though 'gainst superior force,
When in the Indian Ocean four
Were lost together off Grand Port,
Within Mauritius Isle.
Brave Willoughby the *Nereid* led,
And by a splinter on the head
Was wounded in the fight,
But only struck his colours when
Some fifty-three unwounded men
Were left upon the deck ;
And for the *Sirius*, Captain Pym,
On finding she no more could swim,
His ship destroyed by fire ;

And the *Magicienne*, close in rear,
 Unable was the rocks to clear,
 When Curtis followed suit ;
 While Lambert, by three frigates pressed,
 The *Iph'genia*, like the rest,
 Surrendered to the French.
 In classic lore the last of these,
 Made famous by Euripides,
 Was Agamemnon's child,
 Whom he agreed to immolate,
 For weighty purposes of State,
 At Aulis on the coast,
 Though when the knife was raised on high,
 None at the altar could espy
 The victim saved by Heaven,
 But in her stead a goat appeared
 To meet the blow the hand upreared
 Had destined for the maid,
 When sailed the Grecian fleet for war,
 And she, Diana's priestess, saw
 At Taurus Mount, and saved,
 Her brother who, Orestes named
 (With Pylades for friendship famed),
 Was thither brought to die.
 Such is the classic tale, in short,
 When Agamemnon's fleet in port
 Inactive lay, and he,
 For having slain Diana's hind,
 Could only raise a favouring wind
 By yielding up his child.
 The prize our frigate *Africaine*
 Ere long encountered on the main,
 With Tricolour aloft,
 And sailing in her company
 Did Corbet—nothing loth to try
 Conclusions with the foe—

Another ship, *l'Astrée*, descry,
When he resolved to win or die
In making the attempt.
Though thrice his strength the Gallic crews.
A downright challenge to refuse
From any of their sort
Was contrary to Lambert's rule,
A seaman of the Grenville school,
And so it came about
He fell with his lieutenants three,
All slain or wounded mortally
On board the *Africaine*.
With masts and bowsprit tottering left.
And hull by shot in splinters cleft
And sinking 'neath his feet,
And crew disabled more than half,
Her dying captain had to quaff
The bitter cup which oft
He'd held himself to Frenchmen's lips
When cutting-out or capturing ships
In home and foreign seas.
Now Rowley on the scene appeared,
But they to fight his frigate feared
And yielded up their prize,
Which rolled and wallowed in the tide,
And like a charnel-house inside
Appeared the ship to view!
All honour to the *Africaine*,
And should our tars be tried again
In some or other time,
May every one without a stain
The honour of the flag maintain
With like devotedness!*

* The *Africaine* had 49 officers and men killed and 114 wounded out of 295; and the *Nereid*, with a complement of 281, had 92 killed and 138 wounded.

IV.

Ethalion, famed in classic lore,
 And fair *Alcmene*, she who bore
 Heroic Hercules,
 With *Naiad*, nymph of fount and stream,
 And *Triton*, whom the ancients deem
 The god of all the seas.
 Two frigates took off Finisterre,
 When all our captains present there
 Received as money prize
 No less than forty thousand pounds
 (A sum which like a fortune sounds),
 And nigh two hundred each
 Had every man—a "lucky haul,"
 As Jack would so much booty call
 Whene'er it came his way.
 Th' *Ethalion* Bompert's squadron dogged,
 For Ireland bound, and though befogged
 And sometimes chased away,
 Her captain, Countess, sticking close,
 As chance permitted poured a dose
 Of shot on lagging ships,
 Till Warren joined, when she o'erhauled
 One named *Bellone*, already mauled
 By the *Melampus*' fire,
 And captured her, while Graham Moore
 The *Coquille* forced her flag to lower.
 And then the *Résolue*,
 And chased the *Immortalité*,
 Which made all sail from thence away,
 Though brief the respite gained,
 As Martin won her at the last.
 Who led the *Fisgard* (in the past
 The Gallic *Résistance*):

And Durham with the *Anson's* crew,
Assisted by the *Kangaroo*.

Was conqueror of the *Loire*.^{*}
Thus well their own our frigates held
'Gainst those celebrities of eld—

The Tyrrhene mariner,
Who steered his bark across the seas,
And he who read Fate's stern decrees
As though it were a book.†

Fair Phœbe's namesake on the wave
The best of service England gave

When Barlow had command,
And fighting through a summer night,
The *Nereide* forced to own her might

Soon after break of day,
And then she took the *Africaine*,
When o'er two hundred men were slain ;

But some years after this,
Time's whirligig, which changes all,
Saw both these ships for quarter call.

As I have told before.
The *Phæbe*, under Capel, saw
The greatest battle of the war,

And fortunate was she,
As one of Nelson's frigates four,
Her fire upon the foe to pour

And aid the shattered ships.
Latona, Phœbe's child, gave birth,
By Jove, to twins as great on earth
As powerful in Heaven—

* The *Loire* lost 48 killed and 70 wounded; the *Immortalité* her captain, first lieutenant, and 56 officers and men killed, and 61 wounded.

† Ethalion was a celebrated seaman of antiquity, and Melampus a soothsayer and physician.

Apollo, of the Sun and Bow,
 And chaste Diana, whom we know
 As Goddess of the Moon.
 Transformed into a frigate now,
Latona served with Admiral Howe
 Upon the "First of June,"
 And had a part at Curaçoa
 In bringing Holland's colours low
 From ships and batterjes,
 And took by storm Fort Amsterdam
 And boarded both the *Surinam*
 And *Holstaar*, lying in port.
 Th' *Alcmene* Sutton's pennant flew
 When in the Baltic fell Riou
 With face unto the foe,
 And Villeneuve led a French *Alcmène*,
 And rashly sought, although in vain,
 To board a Seventy-four,
 When by the *Venerable's* side
 He ran his little ship, and tried
 To take her by the sword.
 A *Jupiter* upon the main,
 Old Neptune's recognised domain,
 Oft launched his thunder-bolts,
 And one which Holland's flag had flown
 Became a prize at Camperdown,
 And for a second, she
 At San Domingo France's struck;
 While for his spouse, the same ill-luck
 The *Junon* once pursued,
 Though stubbornness her crew displayed,
 Of whom seven score were bleeding laid
 Before resistance ceased.
 Ere long the ship returned once more
 Beneath her native Tricolour,
 When Shortland held command,

Who with a pair engaged in fight
Till hove two other sail in sight,
When he was fain to yield,
And Shortland lost his life as well,
And none more brave in battle fell
Of those for England died.

V.

Fair Isis, she of Egypt Queen
What time Osiris King had been,
A British frigate now,
Made prize of France's *Oriflamme*,
When by his death bold Wheeler came ;
And in the Eastern seas
She had another captain slain
When Hughes endeavoured to retain
Supremacy afloat ;
And under Nelson in the North
The *Isis* showed her martial worth
And suffered heavily,
When homeward was the frigate sent,
Her hull so much by round-shot rent
That she was broken up,
Fair Thetis—who Achilles bore,
And lived in sadness to deplore
His death by Paris' hand—
Now as a frigate, with the *Blonde*,
Two war-ships and the forts beyond,
In Guadaloupe, engaged,
And captured both the *Loire* and *Seine*,
And with her boats, and not in vain,
Attacked some merchantmen.
The goddess' mother, Doris, too,
Our Navy as a frigate knew,
Which had a brilliant part

In cutting-out the *Chevette*, sloop,
When with their boats a sudden swoop
 She and some others made,
A feat of which before I've told
As one in all respects as bold
 As any ever known.
The poets tell how Doris' child,
Sweet Galatea, on Acis smiled
 And scorned the Cyclops' love,
Who, as he on her bosom leant,
Inspired with murderous intent,
 Crushed Acis with a rock,
When, inconsolable with grief,
The sea-nymph found in tears relief
 And changed him to a fount.
As good as Deloraine at need,
The *Galatea* naught recked indeed
 When clearing for the fight,
And once engaged off Tamatave
Two Gallic ships, when o'er the wave
 The *Phæbe* hove in sight,
And with *Astræa* assistance gave
The frigate from her foes to save
 When capture seemed assured,
As to their broadsides no reply
Could she return, or closer lie
 To either one of them,
For all the breeze had died away,
And nothing could she do but stay,
 A target to their fire.
Thus on the ship their cannon played
And fearful was the havoc made
 Within the crowded decks.
Yet though from bow and quarter raked,
No man on board the frigate quaked.
 But fought on doggedly.

And cheered as though the dead to wake,
For life and honour were the stake

Each stood to lose or win,
And o'er the uproar rose the cry,
"The *Galateas* will fighting die

But never yield their ship!"
When Keats had charge the *Andromaque*
She drove ashore and burnt ere dark,

Though under heavy fire,
And then the eager *Galatea*
With boats attacked a privateer,

But, meeting with repulse,
Lost gallant Hardyman, beside
Some five-and-sixty men, who died
Alas! without result.

The deity of justice stern,
Astræa, presiding at the urn

With even scales and sword,
A namesake had which took the *Gloire*,—
As did Lord Dursley once before,

When Anne was England's Queen,—
Though later she "a Tartar caught,"
When having with the *Creole* brought

Two frigates to a stand,
A desperate fight ensued, and they
Were fain *l'Etoile* and *l'Unité*

To own as quite their match;
But though resultless was the fray,
The pair, when crippled, fell a prey

To two of ours they met.
When France Mauritius lost, *l'Astrée*
Among the captured frigates lay

As prize to Bertie's fleet,
And one was there by name *Bellone*,
Which as the *Junon* now was known,
In place of Shortland's ship;

While for *l'Astrée*, renamed *Pomone*,
 She in an inlet, called Sagone
 (Which lies in Corsica),
 Some store-ships and a fort attacked,
 And, by two other frigates backed,
 The whole destroyed by fire.
 Queen Dido, whom Æneas found
 And loved on Carthaginian ground,
 Now to a ship transformed,
 The French *Minerve* in battle won,
 And then beneath a tropic sun
 The Dyaks pacified ;
 And our *Minerva* victory knew,
 When France's *Warwick* bringing to,
 Which recently we'd lost,
 She captured her, though from the bow
 The bowsprit trailed, and lay as low
 Her foremast in the sea.
Actæon, changed into a stag,
 Now as a frigate bore our flag
 In many distant seas,
 But in the China war her fate
 It was to lose her captain, Bate,
 When Canton city fell ;
 Though once she took a prize galleon,
 Each tar enriching to the tune
 Of some five hundred pounds,
 And tales are told how Jack ashore,
 To rid himself of gold galore
 Beyond his wildest dreams,
 Fried watches 'mong his other pranks,
 And passed at grog-shops votes of thanks
 To pimps and dolly-mops
 For easing him of all his gold,
 Acquired with wounds and toil untold
 Upon the stormy main !

VI.

The hundred-headed Hydra we
Have known in Greek mythology,
Three merchantmen assailed,
And Mundy having a battery scaled,
In triumph thence the *Hydra* sailed
With all the ships in tow.
And so the *Harpy*, bird of prey,
Was present on the glorious day
When Copenhagen fell ;
And *Scylla and Charybdis*, rock
And whirlpool once, in battle's shock
Have oft-times met the foe,
And when into a frigate changed,
The former with the *Cadmus* ranged
The sea in many climes—
The hero who first letters knew
And the Bœotian dragon slew,
Of which it is averred
That when the victor sowed its teeth,
Each rose a warrior, armed in sheath
Of steel with sword and spear.
His sister, fair Europa, queen
Of continents, by Jove when seen
Beloved, and beautiful
Aurora,—goddess of the dawn,
Whose rosy fingers tip the morn
And bathe the flowers with dew,—
Have long together roved the sea,
As have Aurora's sons and he,
Orion, whom she loved.
These Phæton and Memnon were,
Of whom the first one sought to share
The guidance of the sun,

But when he tried the car to steer,
 With Phœbus gone, the charioteer
 Came to a fearful end.
 Now sire and wayward son forsook
 The circumambient air, and took
 Their path upon the sea,
 Though when our war-ships' motive force
 Was changed to fire, they had recourse
 Henceforth to steam alone,
 And sailed the ocean wave no more,
 But, fiery as the sun, to war
 The adverse gales defied.
 King Memnon—who Antilochus
 (As Homer's *Iliad* shows to us)
 In single combat slew,
 And fell Achilles' sword beneath,
 Who thus avenged the hero's death
 (Old Nestor's eldest son),
 Whom his Egyptian subjects praised,
 And to their King a statue raised
 Whence came melodious sounds—
 Was author of the alphabet,
 And sad the end a *Memnon* met
 Upon Cape Guardafui;
 While for the frigate *Phaethon*,
 She fought the *Sémillante* alone,
 When anchored near a fort,
 And but for soldiers rendering aid
 The enemy her prize had made,
 Which happened later on.
 When serving on the Spanish coast
Aurora proved herself a host
 While Digby had command—
 The same who our *Alcmene* led,
 And *Africa*, when Nelson bled
 At fateful *Tràfalgàr*—

And won a galley, by a chain
Fast moored, though batteries tried in vain
Her seamen to repulse.
The Muses and the Graces shine
Afloat, but here is drawn the line,
And now and evermore
The Fates, that dreaded trinity,
Remain excluded from the sea,
As causing evil luck
To all mankind in age and youth,
And bringing home to each the truth
Of life's uncertainty,
As Atropos, with shears abhorred,
Divides with ruthless hand the cord
That binds us to the earth.
But yet the *Acheron* we find,
And *Charon* lags not far behind,
Who steers his boat across
The Stygian flood, whence none return,
But in the nether regions burn
Or tread Elysian fields.
Stern Rhadamanthus—whose decree
(One of Europa's sons was he)
Was e'er without appeal.
Who justly ruled the Cyclades
(The Grecian isles Miltiades
Reduced to Athens' sway)
Until he passed to Hades' shade,
And in those gloomy precincts made
His iron will obeyed—
E'en this inexorable judge,
Whose edicts mercy ever grudge,
Is found among our ships;
And so is Pluto, hailed the God
Of all the lower world, whose nod
To endless doom consigned;

And Lethe, once a stream below,
Whose waves in their eternal flow
Oblivion brought to all.
Of "labours" wrought by Hercules—
The last and worst of twelve of these
Eurystheus had imposed—
Was Cerberus from hell to drag,
And as a frigate 'neath our flag
The name she well became,
And when let slip, this dog of war
Around Dubourdieu's heels off shore
At Lissa loudly bayed ;
Who soon discovered that the bite
Of Cerberus was worse in fight
Than even his bark before.
Her men, though but a gallant few
(In all two hundred was the crew,
With others), once attacked
Four Russian gunboats, moored near land,
With many forts in rear at hand,
And, boarding, bore them off.
But in the toils the *Cerberus*
Was almost caught, though as the Russ
And Frenchman she had foiled,
So now the Dons were given the slip,
And from three frigates 'scaped the ship
When they'd surrounded her.
Her captain, Macnamara named,
Had oft-times openly proclaimed
For Spaniards his contempt,
And scarcely less for Frenchmen scorn,
As he at Hyères showed one morn
When on a corvette's deck,
From the *Southampton*, Thirty-two,
His men in Lydiard's charge he threw
And won her in a trice !

VII.

Andromeda, whom Perseus saved
When he the ravening monster braved
As from the sea it rose,
Became, with him, a frigate fair,
And Pegasus, which clove the air,
Now ploughs the stormy sea.
Together with Medusa, one
Of Gorgons three, by Perseus done
To death, whose head retained
The power to petrify all things.
As Perseus bore it high on wings
Across the Lybian sands,
The hero by the rising tide
The nude Andromeda espied,
Fast chained unto a rock.
When Perseus, swooping from the air,
The dragon slew, as from its lair
It rose, with dagger thrust.
Ignoble names were some of these,
But now their glories every breeze
Has wafted to the Poles,
And far abroad, from West to East,
The hero, maid, and, not the least
Among the trio named,
Medusa, once a Gorgon dire,
With stony fear the hearts inspire
Of England's enemies.
The last the pennant flew of Gore
When she the flag of Nelson bore
In Dover Straits, what time
Napoleon his invasion schemed.
And of annexing Britain dream'd
And lording it at sea,

Though reckoned he without his host
 While Nelson guarded England's coast
 And rendered all secure.
 Among our earliest ships by steam
 Impelled was she, and so 'twould seem
 Was fair Aurora's son,
 The kingly frigate, named before,
 Which served in our first China war,
 As well as *Phlegethon*,
 Although *Diana*, nigh a score
 Of years ere this, in Burmah saw
 Some service under steam.
 The goddess—chaste no longer when
 Endymion, handsomest of men,
 With love her heart inspired—
 And her twin-brother of the sun,
 Who built the walls of Ilium, won
 Renown upon the wave.
 Though luckless our *Apollos* are,
 For two beneath an evil star
 Have found their destiny—
 One on the Coromandel coast,
 Which, with all hands on board, was lost.
 And in a gale of wind
 Another under sail was caught,
 And foundered, though the *Carysfort*
 Accompanying her escaped.
 And he, the comely shepherd swain,
 For whom did Dian entertain,
 Although of mortal birth,
 A passion nightly she confessed
 Upon Mount Latmus' lonely crest,
 From whence he watched the stars—
 Endymion, oft with kisses waked,
 Now on the sea with cannon raked
 The Yankee *President*.

Which struck the banner, starred and striped,
And thus her gallant seamen wiped

Away the stain defeat
Inflicted when a privateer
Had beaten off her boats, as near

The shore she lay becalmed.
Hippomanes—the youth who loved
And won fair Atalanta—proved

Her fleetness equally
What time *l'Egyptienne* Shipley chased
And of his metal gave a taste

Ere boarding with his men,
When "Follow me" was Shipley's cry,
Though ere he spoke forth flashed on high

The cutlass and the pike,
And o'er the side our seamen dashed,
Whose arms in furious combat clashed

While loud the cheering rose,
And none were backward there, I trow,
As raged the fight from stern to bow,

Till victory was theirs!
The *Comus* (god of revelry)
As great distinction gained when she

Had Shipley in command,
Who fell at length when in his boat
He sought with others there afloat

To board a Gallic brig.
The *Harpy*—she with vulture's wings
And woman's face, who ever brings

Misfortune to our race,
And robbed Æneas, fresh from Troy,
And sought his seamen to destroy

Who landed on her isle—
Though symbolising all that's ill
To hapless human kind, may still

Be seen among our ships;

And far from being banished thence,
Alecto—breathing pestilence
And war on all around,
Who bears a flaming torch in hand—
When fly the signals of command
In fight is foremost found.
Upon the right of Pluto's throne
Are seated those whom all disown,
While holding them in dread—
To wit, the Parcæ, sisters three,
Presiding over destiny
With a relentless will,
Whose Distaff, Shears, and Spindle call
To mind the fleeting years that all
Bewail of mortal birth.
First Clotho spins the web of life,
While over its perennial strife
Fell Lachesis presides.
And, lastly, Atropos the thread
Divides and severs quick from dead
With an unsparing hand.
Were she who bears the dreaded shears
A sailor's ship, with all his fears
Poor Jack would dread the sea,
For superstition well is known
Among its devotees to own
All toilers of the deep : -
Although the *Syr* we find, which saw
Much fighting in the China War.
And *Sulphur*, *Tartarus*,
And *Acheron*, whose very names
Are redolent of Hades' flames
And Pluto's dark domain.
Far gentler is the memory
Enshrines the peerless Daphne, she
Who unrequited love

To great Apollo freely gave,
Whose namesake aided on the wave
 In Nelson's Baltic fight.
The Tritons—famed 'mong deities
As they who calm the troubled seas.
 Half human in their shape.
With fishes' tails—are creatures strange
Which, shell in mouth, the ocean range
 (Or so the ancients say) ;
And under Pocock, 'gainst d'Aché,
Who to Mauritius fled away.
 The *Triton* was engaged,
And with the *Neptune*, erst her sire,
Encountered she the Gallic fire,
 Which quickly they o'ercame.
The sea-god's mother, Amphitrite,
For long a frigate "taunt and tight,"
 And fair Europa, she
Whom Zeus in changeful form beguiled,
And Minos, King of Crete, their child—
 Who after death became
The judge supreme in Hades' shade,
Before whom all the dead were made
 To advocate their cause.
And when he shook the fatal urn
Each trembling suppliant heard in turn
 His future destiny—
Together now the ocean roam,
And on its billows find a home
 And boundless battle-ground.
The deeds these heroes wrought of yore
Their glories wholly pale before
 The feats our moderns wrought,
And seem apocryphal and tame
Beside those England's tars can claim
 As theirs achieved in war.

The *Spartan*, *Pallas*, *Nymphe*, *Minerve*,
 To fight or else as convoy serve
 Were ready equally,—
Ça va sans dire, as Frenchmen say,—
 When men like Cochrane showed the way.
 Or Brenton or Pellew,
 Who, facing death in every shape,
 With life were lucky to escape
 From battle, fire, and wreck;
 Yet others who the first survived,
 Like Troubridge, Lydiard, Reynolds, lived
 To perish in the storm,
 Or met, with Miller, Farmer, Todd,
 On board the ship whose deck they trod,
 An ending in the flames.

VIII.

Time was the Muses one and all
 Would by their names the Arts recall
 Which ancient Hellas prized,
 But now the sound of each a crew
 Of British tars, brave hearts and true,
 Brings vividly to mind.
Melpomene, whose namesake's praise
 Was sung by Horace in his lays,
 Served England on the sea,
 And under Shortland brought away
 The Gallic *Aventurier*,
 A twelve-gun brig-of-war,
 And then her boats, off Hango Head,
 With many more, by Hankey led.
 Six Russian gunboats won.
 Although the fight was desperate,
 And gallant Hankey fell with eight-
 And-fifty of his men.

Yet greater loss experienced they
When seventeen boats in Finland Bay
Some others carried off,
And then a score of Danish craft
The ship attacked, and fore and aft
Her crowded quarters raked
With eighteen-pounders borne by each
(While they were posted out of reach
As she lay quite becalmed),
Reducing her to such a plight
That under cover of the night
The frigate slipped away.
Another of "the Sacred Nine,"
Whom ancients worshipped as divine—
The Muse presiding o'er
The graceful art of "tripping feet"—
Is represented in our fleet
Since off the Irish coast
We took the French *Terpsichore*
And all the ships, in number three,
Commanded by Thurot.
The daughter of Mnemosyne,
When led by Bowen, won at sea
An immortality.
For Bowen's deeds were bruited far
As unsurpassed by aught the war
Could show of devilry.*
When forth the bo'sun's whistle rang
Each seaman to his station sprang
Almost before it ceased,
And 'twas a goodly sight to see
The men of the *Terpsichore*
Assembled at their posts,

* The *Terpsichore* was dubbed by the Spaniards "the little Devil" for her daring and ubiquity.

Where all appeared as trim and smart,
And bore withal as good a heart.

As though just piped to grog !
No foreign sailor, Don or Gaul,
But on his patron saint would call

On sighting Bowen's ship,
And ere embarking, monk and friar
Invoked for him his chief desire—

A safe and quick return,
Or should he hap to meet short shift
At Bowen's hands, a passage swift
From earth to Paradise.

Calliope, poetic muse !

To thee will none the meed refuse

Of valour and success,
And well did her commander, Kane,
Uphold her honour free from stain,

And laurels pluck afresh
In smartly getting under way,
While strewed was all Samoa Bay

With wrecks of foreign ships.

Her sister, Clio, who presides
O'er history's page, has won besides
Celebrity afloat.

And so's Euterpe, of the flute
Inventress, who to music, mute

Before, gave voice, and she,
Thalia, pictured with a crook,
The muse presiding o'er the book

Of poems pastoral,
With others of the sisters nine.
Who have our rule upon the brine
Maintained victoriously.

IX.

Thus glorious is the halo rests,
By valour won, upon the crests
Of gods and goddesses,
And Venus even, though frail, could taste .
The pleasure virtue yields, and chaste
Penelope no less.
The first did battle with d'Aché.
And Blackwood, in the last, Decrès
Assisted to defeat,
While for the *Venus*, *l'Arethuse*
She won, and ne'er was known to lose
A right to any foe ;
And victory crowned the *Circe*, too,
(Though differed much her present crew
From that the enchantress ruled,)
When struck to her the *Palinure*.
O'ercome by downright pluck, be sure,
And not by fiendish wiles.
A *Palinurus*—who for long,
As Virgil mentions in his song,
Æneas piloted—
Surveyed the Erythræan sea.
And, passing through the Straits that we
Now Babelmandeb call,—
Which Arabs named the “ Gate of Tears,”
As superstition filled with fears
The ocean lying beyond,—
The Red Sea then examined through
From Perim's desert island to
The Gulf of Akaba.*

* The writer served with the 10-gun brig-of-war *Palinurus*, which for many years was employed on the survey of the Red Sea and adjacent waters.

Who knows not how Ulysses brave
Nigh fell a victim in the cave
The Cyclops dwelt within?
When sails first fell in disrepute,
Ere paddle steamers followed suit
And screws were still unknown,
We find the one-eyed Cyclops king
Of Homer's wild imagining
Oft-times engaged afloat.
While Polyphemus Tråfalgår
Saw mustered in the ranks of war,
And so it comes about
That round the monarch's classic brow
The auriole is circled now
Of Nelson's mightier name!
Great Pallas, hail! upon thy bust
Rest laurels which oblivion's dust
Can ne'er obliterate:
And many were the names assumed
By chaste Minerva, helmed and plumed,
The goddess of the arts,
Who once the giant, Pallas, slew,
Whence all the warlike goddess knew
And worshipped by the name,
And as Athæne, she, no less,
Became the city's patroness
Where flourished all the arts.
The praises of the crew and ship
Were heralded by every lip
When Cochrane had command,
Who ships and forts attacked, which could
Have sunk them had the gunners stood
To their artillery.
The *Pallas* thus in greatness grew
While his and Seymour's pennants flew
At her main-topmast-head;

And also prizes not a few
Did Hood's *Minerva* capture, too,
While *la Minerve* of France
Lord Nelson, when a commodore,
Commanded off Malaga's shore,
When the *Sabina* struck.
But half a century before
The laurel wreath a *Pallas* wore.
When, under Elliott, she
And *Æolus*—the god of wind,
Who sails invented for mankind
And mapped the starry sky—
A Gallic squadron, homeward bound
From landing troops on Irish ground,
Their colours forced to lower.
With Hotham first, and then with Strachan,
Whose flag was in the *Cæsar* borne,
The *Æolus* had part—
Of classic names a medley strange,
And one our views to disarrange
Of what is *comme il faut*.

X.

The *Vestal* made herself so free
As to belie the chastity
Her name of old implied,
And loved consorting overmuch
With Frenchmen, Spaniards, Danes, and Dutch
Without the least reserve,
As under Hood was manifest
When *la Bellone* and all the rest
She won by force of arms.
And Doris—lately of the sea
A tutelary deity—
Was famous more than most.

As was Calypso, in her isle
Who sought Ulysses to beguile
 When sailing home from Troy,
And long deprived Penelope
Of one she only pined to see,
 Who all her suitors told
That she no other spouse could take
While she'd the tapestry to make,
 Though nightly she undid
The work each morning saw complete,
While waiting patiently to greet
 Her lord at Ithaca.
And so, with hopes at lowest ebb
And flowing tears, she wrought the web
 For twenty weary years,
Until at length her wandering lord
Was to the loving arms restored
 Of his Penelope !
The frigate's captain Nelson loved,
And oft for him his friendship proved,
 And Blackwood 'twas who rowed
At Portsmouth in the *Victory's* barge,
And earlier of the ship had charge
 When struck the *Guillaume Tell* ;
While the *Calypso*, under Weir,
When cruising with a frigate near
The coast of Denmark, won
 (By arms and not the lover's spell)
Some vessels, when three hundred fell
 On board the captured craft.
Among the ocean deities
Electra, sung by Sophocles,
 Our Navy long has known,
And Castor, Pollux brother-twin,
Alone a place has found therein,
 And thus they're parted now

Whose wonderful fraternal love,
As Gemini, their father, Jove,
Immortalised in Heaven.
The friends of navigators they,
Around their heads were seen to play,
When with the Argonauts,
The tempest fires which bear their name,
And which, together found, proclaim
The storm will pass away,
Though when but one aloft appears,
It demonstrates to seamen's fears
That danger is at hand—
At least the ancients so aver,
Though as authorities they err
On superstition's side.
The *Castor* failed her power to show
Or even to strike a single blow
That glorious day of June,
When Howe a prize discovered her
And Troubridge as a prisoner
In Admiral Neilly's hands,
Though long the captain and his craft
At all pursuers loudly laughed
And chased the French in turn.
The *Psyche* next I fain would sing,
Whose namesake and her husband bring
To mind the legend old
Of Venus slaying Cupid's wife,
When Jove restored the nymph to life
And immortality,
And *Psyche's* name now signifies
The human soul that never dies
And stamps us as divine.
She was by Lambert forced to strike,—
The *San Fiorenzo's* chief, who, like
Her captain, Bergeret.

Defeat when in the *Java* met.
 And paid, moreover, nature's debt.
 As did the Frenchman then.
 The *Psyche*, like her conqueror, thus
 A victory denotes for us,
 For some few years ere this,
 The *San Fiorenzo* ours became
 When Hood, her captor, changed her name
 (*Minerve*) to that she bore,
 And Hardinge fell when in command,
 Before whom none in valour stand
 Of those who've died at sea.
 The *Cleopatra*—she who smiled
 On Cæsar first and then beguiled
 His rival, Antony.
 And in the height of Actium's fray.
 Her galleys turned and fled away.
 Deserting him who staked
 An empire for her lustrous eyes—
 Unto a Gallic ship was prize,
 Though not for many days,
 For when the *Poictiers* hove in sight,
 The pair could neither fly nor fight,
 So crippled was their state.
 The *Cleopatra*, later on.
 The *Topaze* with the *Jason* won,
 Of equal force with her,
 And then the *Jason* took the *Seine*.
 And by her was the *Vengeance* ta'en.
 When Milne led on the prize,
 Who mourned that day a gallant son,
 While at Algiers, where Exmouth won,
 From 'neath the batteries
 He scorned his flagship to remove.
 Though *hors de combat* were above
 One-quarter of her crew.

Prometheus, filled with vain desire,
Brought down to earth the Heavenly fire,

Outwitting Jove himself,
And oft the legend formed the theme
Which has inspired the waking dream

Of celebrated bards,
From Æschylus' and Hesiod's time
To Shelley's tragedy sublime.

The poet's greatest work.
He fashioned man of earthly mould,
And breathed into the figure cold

The stolen fire divine,
And scorned Pandora's fatal box
And was for ages bound to rocks,

When on his vitals preyed
A vulture (sent by Jove's decrees)
Until heroic Hercules

The rash Prometheus saved.
When cruising off the Finnish shore,
His namesake, now a sloop-of-war,

Three Russian gunboats seized,
And with *Pandora* served for years,
Who in mythology appears

As she who was endowed
By Jupiter and all the gods
With gifts, which turned, save hope, to rods
Wherewith to scourge mankind.

He who Pandora made from clay --
And dwelt below where light of day

Could never penetrate,
Who forged the thunder-bolts of Jove,
And arms for all the gods who strove

'Gainst the Titanic hosts,
Within Mount Etna's flaming sides, --
Great Vulcan, who o'er fire presides
And implements of war,

Now, as our Navy's records tell,
Hurls from her cannon shot and shell
 Upon Old England's foes ;
As also she whom Jove begot,
Whose mother's prayers he heeded not
 Although with tears besought
To save sweet Proserpine from him,
The ravisher, and blacksmith grim
 To the Olympian Gods,
Who bore her from the fountain's brink
While stooping on its marge to drink
 When tired of culling flowers.

XI.

The Queen the Æon isle who ruled,
Whose spells Ulysses long befooled
 To linger by her side,
And changed his warriors of the brine
Into a herd of filthy swine,
 Was now herself transformed,
And as a ship attacked the *Ligne*,
Of sixteen guns, which lay between
 Some batteries in a bay,
And sought to win her by the sword,
Though thrice was Crooke, who tried to board,
 Repulsed with heavy loss,
And out of seventy twelve returned
Without a wound, whose spirits burned
 Their fortunes to retrieve,
And this, upon the following day,
In charge of one Lieutenant Hay,
 The *Circe's* tars achieved.
The *Boreas* "blustering railer" called,
The French *Sirène* once overhauled,
 Though greater fame she gained

As Nelson's ship, when every tongue
The praises of her captain sung :

And so the *Romulus*,
The *Tartar* and the *Doris* stand
Renowned at sea as once on land.

And equally I sing
Of Flora, goddess famed of flowers,
And she to whom in golden showers

Great Jupiter appeared—
Fair Danæ, who Perseus bore
And was exposed upon the shore.

But with her son escaped.
These frigates prizes were to Hoste,
And both great services could boast

Performed beneath our flag,
With Leda, who the Gemini
Had borne, the twins now in the sky

A constellation bright,
Where 'midst the stars the brothers shine,
As with a constancy divine

They once appeared on earth.
Some time before the *Danæ*
Was by an act of treachery

Delivered to the French,
Though small the gain the traitors got,
As they were left in gaol to rot

Till Amiens' peace was signed,
Which naught, howe'er, improved their lot,
For well they knew a rope, I wot,

Awaited their return.
Helen, loveliest of her sex—
Whose frailties did with bloodshed vex

The old Homeric world—
When she was wed to Sparta's lord
(King Menelaus) brought a sword
To all of Grecian blood,

As Paris, Priam's son, to Troy
 The fair one managed to decoy,
 Which caused the Trojan war ;
 And sweet Hermione—her child,
 Ere she by Paris was beguiled
 To fly with him from home—
 To British frigates gave their names,
 And she especial honour claims,
 For when given up to Spain,
 As was the Danæe to France,
 Brave Hamilton resolved his chance
 To try of winning her.
 A gallant band as ever trod
 The deck of man-of-war, or rode
 At headlong speed when rang
 The clarion's blare to sound the charge,
 Embarked in every boat and barge
 Of our corvette *Surprise* ;
 And was no word by any spoke,
 But all gave way till daylight broke,
 When boarding with despatch,
 They slew or overboard all drove
 Who sought to stay their course and prove
 Equality with them.
 All honour to the gallant few
 Who rescued from the foreign crew
 A ship by treason lost,
 And brought her England's flag beneath,
 Although to many wounds and death
 Alone were their rewards !
 Ill fortune dogged the name for Spain,
 And soon *Hermione* again
 A prize to us became,
 And this time to the ship *Hussar*,
 When luck befell the British tar
 Beyond all precedent,

For half a million pounds in cash
Rewarded handsomely the dash
The brave "Hussars" displayed :
And ne'er before had so much pelf,
Or cargo of such priceless wealth,
Been taken in a ship.
To Jupiter, by her amour,
Fair Leda Clytemnestra bore,
Besides the heavenly twins,
Though some assert the damsel's sire
Was Tyndarus, whose jealous ire
His guilty wife incurred.
It matters not how'er this be,
But, like her mother, frail was she.
And when from Argos sailed
Her lord, Mycenæ's warrior King,
Ægisthus hasted she to bring
To Agamemnon's bed,
On whose return she slew him there,
And thenceforth reigned the guilty pair
Until her son appeared—
Orestes, whom Electra saved
(His sister) and the anger braved
Of the adulterous Queen.
This youth, of Pylades the friend,
Long brooded on the tragic end
His father had befallen,
And stabbed at Argos, though alone,
The lovers who Mycenæ's throne
Disgraced with their amours.
Now, once it chanced, when cruising near
Boulogne to keep the Channel clear,
The brig *Orestes* took
The *Pylades*, a privateer,
Which happened to be passing here
From Rotterdam, her port.

I sing of Jason, he who steered
 To Colchis, birthplace of the weird
 Medea, who embarked
 To seek with him the Golden Fleece,
 Which he desired to bring to Greece,
 With other Argonauts,
 And who, returning with the band,
 Her children killed with ruthless hand,
 Inspired by jealousy.
 The tragic tale, whose horrors freeze
 The listener's blood. Euripides
 Has sung in deathless verse.
 And now both Jason and his wife
 As frigates have revived to life
 And bear our country's flag.

XII.

The bomb-ships' names their duties tell—
 So redolent are they of Hell.
 The Hades of the gods—
 As Tartarus and Phlegethon,
 Which since the Armada's day have won
 Distinction on the sea.
 And Bomarsund and Sweaborg may
 Be cited in the present day
 As evidencing how
 On fortresses, when sea-begirt,
 The mortars still their powers assert
 To burn or batter down.
 But once misfortune fell upon
 A bomb-ship named the *Acheron*,
 Which, while some merchantmen
 Convoying home, two frigates met,
 Which so the *Acheron* beset
 That she her colours lowered,

Ill-luck by folly brought about,
As surely was the sending out
Of bombs to convoy ships.
The *Acheron*, which here appears,
'Mong Hades' streams the gloomy fears
Of Greeks placed anciently,
And oft for Hell itself it stands,
(Though through Epirus' sunny lands
One flows into the sea),
Like *Erebus*, which Franklin bore
When last he sailed—and Ross before
In the Antarctic seas—
And, with the *Terror*, left ashore
Her bones to bleach for evermore,
With those of all on board.
The *Fury*, *Hecla*, bombs like these,
Made voyages to Arctic seas,
With Parry in command,
And played the *Hecate* her part
(Once goddess of the magic art)
And *Griper*, *Tantalus*—
Who, tortured with unceasing thirst,
Was most of mortal men accursed
By Jupiter's decree,
When o'er his head, upon the bough,
He saw the fruit denied him now
For past impiety.
Both *Etna* and *Vesuvius* e'er
Among the bomb-ships foremost were
In Hawke's and Benbow's day,
With *Lucifer*, that fallen star,
Who, filled with envious hate, from far
Surveyed celestial joys,
As in his song of Paradise
Our Milton sings, who says that thrice
Accursed was he of Heaven.

The *Thunderer*, *Terror*, *Stromboli*,
 Bombarded Cadiz from the sea,
 With Nelson commodore,
 And Algiers' forts were set aflame
 When in the bay the *Infernal* came
 With Exmouth's conquering fleet—
 A name of darkness, not of light,
 Suggestive more to ears polite,
 Which shun the nether world.
 Of old the fireships havoc great
 In action wrought, and even so late
 As in Lord Cochrane's time,
 When he had blown the boom apart,
 They terror struck in every heart
 On board of Allemand's ships,
 Of which some drifted up the stream,
 Or helpless lay upon their beam
 On sand banks high and dry,
 While others were observed to sink,
 Or burned unto the water's brink,
 Deserted by their crews.
 The *Vulture*, foulest bird of prey,
 And *Fury*, *Firebrand*, *Viper*, may
 Be counted in the list,
 With Ceres' daughter, *Proserpine*,
 And *Pluto*, erst her spouse divine
 And monarch of the Shades,
 Which served with Hawke, when perished Hume,
 The *Pluto's* brave commander, whom
 His chief sincerely mourned.
 And here, *en passant*, I'd relate
 How once the *Proserpine* a fate
 As dire by shipwreck met,
 When many seamen died of frost,
 Though Wallis safely brought the most
 Across the ice ashore.

Torpedoes will remain the craze
Till other novelties we praise,
As in the killing art
By experts held to be the best,
Although till war applies the test
There is no certainty
Which can be termed the speediest way
Britannia's enemies to slay,
Though on the single point
That powder kills not fast enough,
They all are made of sterner stuff
Than to encourage qualms!
So ships are sunk by rams with blows
Ere any man on board them knows
That sudden death's at hand,
Or in the night torpedo-boats
Destroy with surety all that floats,
From first-class battle-ships
To peaceful merchantmen that lie
In port in false security,
Not dreaming of attack.
Explosives such as these contain,
With infamy our manhood stain
When used in war, and for
The Christianity we claim,
The lessons in its Holy Name
Enjoined are set at naught,
And even humanity cries out
At murder, legalised no doubt,
But wicked none the less.
Torpedoes—whether submarine,
Or floating where they may be seen,
Which sink a ship-of-war,
Or light her powder magazine,
Thus slaying by hundreds those who'd been
In God's own image wrought—

Are weapons from the armoury
Of the assassin of the sea
Which we should interdict,
And though Quixotic it may sound,
By treaty Europe should be bound
Their future use to shun.
As now by her unwritten law
Explosive bullets are in war
By all prohibited.

XIII.

The *Iris* and the *Mercury*
Are equally as swift at sea
As when Jove's messengers,
And we the *Hermes* also own
(A name by which the last was known
In Greek mythology),
Of whom the *Mercury*, at least,
From Tudor times has never ceased
To bear the English flag,
And though we once an *Iris* won,
A *Hermes*, which aground had run,
We lost off Fort Mobile.
The pilot Hannibal despatched,
Who thought a mutinous plot he'd hatched
'Gainst his authority,
Pelorus named, afloat is found
(As also on Sicilian ground),
Like Nestor, who was thought
The sagest of the Grecian kings.
And 'mong the warriors Homer sings
The bravest, save for three—
Ulysses, of the "Odyssey,"
Achilles, mightier still than he,
And Ajax, quite as good.

So Pegasus—the horse with wings
(Which Hesiod to our memory brings
In his “Theogony”)
Which bore in air Bellerophon
(Whose feats Apollodorus sung
When he Chimæra slew
And Jupiter e’en rashly braved),
And Perseus carried when he saved
The doomed Andromeda—
Now by a metamorphosis,
As strange as any told, I wis,
In Ovid’s startling verse,
Was changed into a frigate trim,
Henceforth the boundless sea to swim;
And once the *Pegasus*
Was on a mission sent by Howe,
Who urgently desired to know
The movements of the French,
With Barlow in command, to Brest,
While close off shore with all the rest
He stood in readiness.
Andromeda, who Perseus’ love
Acquired and shines in Heaven above
Among the starry host;
And he who, swooping down from air,
The Dragon, issuing from its lair,
Destroyed with dagger thrust;
And fell Medusa, she whose hair
Minerva changed to snakes, whose stare
No mortal could endure
Without being forthwith turned to stone,
Till doughty Perseus went alone,
With Pallas’ buckler armed,
And slew the Gorgon while asleep,
And over Ethiopia’s steep
The head to Atlas bore;

And also Daphne, fair to see,
Who shunned Apollo's company
 When followed by the god,
And through the woods and country ranged
Till she was to a laurel changed
 To save her from pursuit—
Each one of these and many such
With Frenchmen, Spaniards, Danes, and Dutch,
 Have warred victoriously.
Of old King Saturn ruled the world,
And battling with the Titans, hurled
 Them headlong out of Heaven,
But when to him fair Ops bore Jove,
To slay his son the monarch strove,
 When in a cave in Crete
Concealment for the child she found,
Whence Ida's mount was sacred ground
 To all of godlike birth.
When Jove attained to man's estate,
Unto his sire he dealt the fate
 That Saturn meant for him,
And reigned as King of Earth and Heaven,
While to his brothers twain were given
 The other worlds to rule,
When Pluto lorded it in Hell.
And Neptune o'er the seas, as well
 As those who sail thereon.
Among our ships not only he,
But Jove's prolific progeny
 And paramours are found—
As fair Irene, one of three
Called Horæ, whose divinity
 The poets sung as they
Who op'd Olympus' gates each morn,
And Phœbus' horses at the dawn
 Yoked to his fiery car ;

And other daughters—Proserpine,
As also all the Muses nine,
 Borne by Mnemosyne.
For female loveliness no one,
Save Venus only 'neath the sun,
 With dainty Proserpine
Could bear the least comparison,
And Ceres' daughter was undone
 (The Greek Persephone)
By Pluto, then of Hades king,
Who watched the maid near Cyane's spring
 And bore her to the Shades.
Egeria, who, dissolved in tears,
Into a fountain (as appears
 From Ovid's verse) was changed :
And Ninus' queen, who Bactria won
And much embellished Babylon.
 The great Semiramis ;
And Tigris' and Euphrates' wave,
With Ganges' stream and Indus, gave
 Their names to ships-of-war.
Orlando, Shakespeare's hero, who
With ease the boastful wrestler threw
 In Ardennes' forest glade,
And gave his heart to Rosalind,
Who loved him in return, we find
 Installed in England's fleet ;
With Hebe, youth's fair goddess she,
Who was in perpetuity
 Cupbearer to the gods.
Till Jove preferred young Ganymede.
When Hebe, angered by the deed,
 Espoused great Hercules ;
And different far in every sense,
Alecto, breathing pestilence
 And war on all mankind.

XIV.

'Mong naval representatives
 Of Grecian rivers still survives
 The Granicus, whose stream
 The Macedonians drove across
 The Persian Army, foot and horse,
 When Alexander led ;
 And Hebrus, facing Samothrace,
 Whose women, noted for their grace,
 The love-lorn Orpheus slew,
 And then all trace of guilt to hide,
 They cast his head into the tide
 Of Hebrus at the flood,
 Though as it floated down, it cried
 The name more loved than all beside,
 Repeating o'er and o'er
 "Eurydice ! Eurydice !"
 Until it drifted to the sea,
 And there amid the waves
 Was lost in its immensity,
 Like many an act of blood that we
 May ne'er recorded find !
 When Exmouth brought upon his knees
 The Dey of Algiers, both of these
 Assistance rendered him,
 And Palmer, who the *Hebrus* led,
 Ere this had won a victory, said
 To be by few surpassed,
 When he *l'Etoile's* resistance quelled,
 Which had *Astræa* before repelled
 And Captain Eveleigh slain.
 The stream which washes Sparta's walls,
 Eurotas, by its name recalls
 Laconia's earliest king,

And oft the frigate prizes gained,
And once the French *Clorinde* attained,
Though with the *Dryad's* aid.
The *Spartan*, name in every land
Renowned ! when Brenton had command,
Sustained her ancient fame,
And though with carnage beaten back,
Her crew, when they again attacked,
Were victors in the end,
And deeply of the goblet drank
Revenge makes sweet, and took or sank
Some craft in Naples Bay,
Which from the port Murat despatched,
And though the *Spartan* was o'ermatched
In guns and complement,
They were too happy to escape.
But not till Brenton, hit by grape,
Severely wounded tell,
A man possessed of Benbow's grit,
Who, save for fighting, cared no whit
For aught beneath the sun.

XV.

Those Grecian isles, the Cyclades,
Their names to frigates gave, the seas
Which ploughed so merrily,
As Delos, whence Apollo sprung,
And Scio's isle, where Homer sung,
And Colephon, wherein
Arachne dwelt, who deftly plied
Her needle, and with Pallas vied
In skilfulness to match,
Incurring thus her jealous hate,
And met a suicidal fate,
To her presumption due.

And famed the Sybil was as much,
For whom the god, Apollo, such
 A passion entertained,
That of her favours to be free
He gave her immortality.
 But not the accompaniments
Of beauty and perpetual youth.
And when she broke her plighted troth
 And scorned Apollo's love,
Although with length of years endowed,
Her figure with decay was bowed
 And sad decrepitude,
And withered was that blooming face,
In which Æneas failed to trace
 The charm it once possessed.
The Sibyl gave the hero aid
To find his sire in Hades' shade,
 Where old Anchises dwelt.
And offered Tarquin many tomes
Of verses Sybilline, which Rome's
 Dictator long refused,
Though finally he purchased three,
And at a price the same as she
 Had asked for all the nine.
In Burmah the *Arachne* fought,
And to the *Sybille* struck the *Forté*,
 When Cooke, her captain, fell ;
And one in China served, where more
Than forty years ago I saw
 The *Sybille* under sail,
And 'twas indeed a sight to please
To watch the frigate, with the breeze
 Upon her starboard beam,
With stun'sails set and heeling o'er
Till on her copper seemed to pour
 A flood of golden light,

And so beneath the evening sun,
As though engaged a race to run,
The *Sybil* sank from view !
When flying o'er the Ægean Sea
Fell Icarus, who hastily
From Minos had escaped—
The King who ruled the Isle of Crete
What time the monster used to eat
The maids and youths from Greece—
And traversing the azure sky,
He rashly steered his course too high
And neared the noontide sun,
Which melted from his wings outspread
The wax cementing them, when sped
He headlong to the deep !
His father, who had shared his flight,
More lucky, managed to alight
On the Sicilian coast,
Though sire and son, 'tis said, but sailed
The sea, and canvas 'twas that failed,
Not wings, to carry them ;
But howsoever this be, 'tis sure
Their names as frigates will endure
In history's page for aye.
Megæra, also, child of Nox
And Acheron, since first the stocks
She quitted for the wave.
Much service witnessed till she left
Her timbers in a rocky cleft
Upon a tropic isle ;
And 'mong the dread Eumenides,
She with Alecto, one of these,
Served England faithfully,
Who once with burning torch in hand
And whip of scorpions, all the land
Laid waste with fire and sword.

The Graces, lovely sisters three,
 Jove's daughters by Eurynome,
 To frigates gave their names,
 And, also, on the Trojan side,
 Euryalus, young Nisus' guide,
 On whom the Mantuan bard
 Dilates in memorable verse,
 Their death describing, when reverse
 Æneas' cause befell,
 And their proverbial love, as great
 As that of Theseus for his mate
 Or Pylades for his.
 Her captain, Blackwood, Nelson's friend,
 Did Collingwood to England send
 From Cadiz, where he lay,
 And she, the *Naiad*—nymph of springs,
 Among whose wild imaginings
 Ne'er entered fame like this—
 The *Sirius*, once a wandering star,
 And *Phæbe*, witnessed Tráfalgàr
 And Nelson's glorious end.

XVI.

Of fair Andromache—the wife
 Of Trojan Hector, who his life
 For Ilium sacrificed—
 How touching is the incident
 By Homer told! When Hector bent
 To kiss Astyanax,
 The babe she cradled in her arms,
 Inspired with infantile alarms,
 Gave vent to piercing cries
 At sight of Hector's nodding crest,
 And hid his face upon the breast
 Of sad Andromache,

On which the hero, with a smile,
Removed his helm and visor while

He bade his son farewell!

The frigate at her best was seen
In action with an Algerine,

Whose boarders she repelled,
And on her decks her seamen threw,
Who o'er one hundred Moslems slew

And made the Corsair theirs.

No lyrics Sappho's have surpassed,
And surely none will longer last,

Though only few survive :

Nor less for lust, we must confess,
And her bewitching loveliness,

Was this fair Lesbian known,
Who when by Phaon jilted, stung
Beyond endurance, headlong flung
Herself into the sea.

Leander—he who swam the flood
To Sestos' shore, where Hero stood

With burning torch in hand—
And she—who to the Abydos youth
Each time renewed with simple truth

Her vows of constancy,
Until the Hellespont one night
Leander swallowed up from sight,

And Hero left alone
In bitterness of soul to mourn,
And curse the day that she was born
And pray the gods for death,
And when it came not, from the tower,
Where she had watched for many an hour,

The frenzied maiden sprang—
Are now together seen again,
But only on the watery plain
Which he so oft had dared.

The ship that bears fair Hero's name
Assisted Hawke and Hughes to tame
The Gallic Navy's pride,
And victory under Calder won,
And Strachan, a few months later on,
When Alan Gardner led;
And for Leander, who the tide
Once swam to stand by Hero's side,
A frigate bore her name,
In every way as bold and true,
Although the ship disaster knew
When, bearing from the Nile
Despatches home, by evil luck
She met the *Généreux*, and struck
To her superior fire,
For fifty guns 'gainst seventy-four
Were doomed to fail, though all or more
Was wrought that man could do.
The casualties the French sustained
Were greater than the ship they gained
Could reckon as her crew,
Which lost one-third her gallant tars,
While all her topsail-yards and spars
Lay dragged o'er the side,
And for her hull, throughout with shot
'Twas riddled so that scarce a spot
Was free from injury.
The boats upon the booms were smashed,
No plank but what with blood was splashed,
And all the coils of rope
With gouts and smears of gore were stained,
And pools denoted where had drained
The ebbing stream of life;
While shattered timbers lay around,
And binnacle and wheel were found
In splinters on the deck.

And not a sail could hold the wind,
As projectiles of every kind
Had rent and riddled them,
And she, above all frigates trim,
Could now with difficulty swim,
Though all the pumps were rigged.
Some cannon-balls, which seemed half spent,
Had failed to wreak the mischief meant
By those who laid the guns,
And in the hull embedded lay,
But most had found the billet they
Had been despatched to fill ;
And many a gun dismounted lay
Long ere the cannon ceased to play
Upon the fighting deck,
And for the carriages and gear,
In pieces were they scattered near,
With seamen dead beneath !
Where lately rose the cannon's roar,
Now sounds were heard which had before
Been drowned amid the din,
And cries of wounded men and moans
From those fast dying were the tones
That struck the listener's ear.
The writhing form, the fast-clenched hand,
Disclosed how some would fain command
The evidence of pain,
But vain, alas ! all efforts were,
And furrowed brows too well declare
What tongue would never tell,
Till issued forth the stifled groan
From lips no agony would own
Or ask for sympathy !

XVII.

Pandora Vulcan made of clay,
And all Olympus showered, they say,
 Their choicest gifts on her—
The Graces power to captivate,
And Venus loveliness as great
 As she herself possessed :
Apollo taught her how to sing,
And Mercury persuasion bring
 By eloquence of speech.
While Pallas presents, rich and rare,
Bestowed upon Pandora fair,
 And mighty Jove himself
A box conferred of priceless worth,
From which, when opened, issued forth
 Disease to plague mankind.
To gratify his heart's desire,
And punish one the sacred fire
 Had stolen from Heaven, the god
Pandora offered him as spouse,
But in Prometheus doubts to rouse
 Of Jupiter's intent,
Whose brother took the tempting bid,
And having raised the casket's lid,
 Filled earth with every ill—
So runs the tale of Jove's deceit.
And how the artful mortal beat
 The monarch of the gods.
Fair Niobe, Amphion's wife,
Inflated with the pride of life,
 Latona ridiculed,
When all her sons Apollo slew,
And Dian every daughter, too,
 (Save Chloris), sacrificed—

A cruel deed, which, when 'twas done,
The weeping mother turned to stone,

A monument of grief;
Though now her name no longer tears
To us portends, or timorous fears,

But martial confidence,
And is no breeze her flag but flaunts,
While for her crew no danger daunts
The gallant *Niobes*.

Alcestis, whom great Hercules
From Hades saved, now sails the seas.

And shows devotedness
For England great as when, of old,
E'en life itself she gladly sold

Her husband to regain,
Who, stricken by a fell disease,
(So sweetly sings Euripides)

Descended to the Shades.
The tale of how Alcestis gave
Her life Admetus thus to save,

A greater celebrates:
And Milton in his loftiest stave
The love applauds which from the grave
Her spouse restored to earth.

Hood's prize, *Minerve*, now called *Alceste*,
A frigate captured nigh to Brest

And many merchantmen,
And under Maxwell's charge her crew
For valour celebrated grew,

And they the enterprise,
With others, to an issue brought,
Of cutting-out from 'neath a fort

The *Chevette*, sloop-of-war,
The *Argo*, named from Jason's ship—
When he to Colchis made his trip

To find the Golden Fleece—

While cruising off Manilla port,
 A huge galleon, with every sort
 Of treasure filled, secured,
 Though were eight hundred men on board
 The merchandise and bullion stored
 Within her hold to guard.
 A Dutchman, with the Argo's name,
 To our own *Phoenix* prize became,
 But in the present day
 Both Jason, once an Argonaut,
 And Argo vainly may be sought
 Among our men-of-war.
 Not so fair Ceres, erst of corn
 The deity (by Vesta borne
 To Saturn), from whose arms
 Was Proserpine by Pluto torn,
 When wandered she, with grief forlorn,
 Throughout all Sicily,
 Till Ceres found her daughter's veil,
 And learned the melancholy tale
 From Arethusa's lips,
 When Jove she prayed with tears in vain
 Her child from Pluto's dark domain
 To bring to earth again.
 As Ceres' barns with grain o'erflowed,
 So now her list of triumphs showed
 A harvest brimming o'er,
 And one to Rodney fell a prey
 That memorable April day
 He beat the Count de Grasse.
 A frigate famed and fair to see
 Was *Ariadne* equally
 With many I have sung,
 And with the *Meleager* (who
 The boar of Calydonia slew
 Which roamed Ætolia's land),

Along the shore of France she stood,
And closely watched Toulon when Hood
 Blockaded all the coast,
And with her the *Agamemnon* served,
Whose captain, Nelson, was "the observed
 Of all observers" there.
The tale mythology relates
How Ariadne's life the Fates
 With that of Theseus linked,
And how the hero loved awhile,
And then forsook on Naxos' Isle
 Pasiphæ's fair child,
Whom Bacchus found disconsolate
And mourning for her faithless mate
 Whose life she'd saved in Crete,
What time, when guided by a thread,
The Minotaur he slew and led
 The Grecian captives free.
The hapless maiden, who bewailed
Ungrateful Theseus when he sailed
 To claim his father's throne,
No longer for her lover pines,
But now a constellation shines
 Among the starry host,
And as a cruiser ploughs the seas
And flaunts aloft in every breeze
 Old England's Union Jack.
Tydides—once Ætolia's King,
Whom Mantua's bard and Homer sing
 As 'mong the bravest chiefs
Who led the Grecian hosts to war,
And Hector and Æneas saw
 In battle face to face,
And the Palladium helped to steal,
Whose safety legend said the weal
 Or woe of Troy involved—

As *Diomedé*, until the time
She went ashore in India's clime,
 Much service saw afloat,
And helped Ceylon to subjugate
When Holland joined Napoleon, late
 Her foe no less than ours.
Of *Dædalus* I've writ before,
And his escape when flying o'er
 The *Ægean* sea from Crete.
When Minos sought to avenge the shame
Attaching to his outraged name,
 And as a man-of-war
On Lissa's day (*Corona* called)
Was by the *Active* overhauled
 And struck to Gordon's fire,
When being renamed the *Dædalus*,
She triumphs oft achieved for us
 In Oriental seas.

XVIII.

Who has not heard the legend old
How Orpheus, though of earthly mould,
 The rocks entranced with song,
And Nature seemed as though 'twere charmed,
While wolves the sheep no longer harmed
 And hawks forgot their prey :
And e'en the rivers ceased to flow,
And hushed were all the winds, as though
 Transfixed within their bounds.
In Hades stayed was Pluto's hand,
As though by Jupiter's command.
 From urging his behests.
And Proserpine, his queenly mate,
Descended from her high estate
 To list to Orpheus' lyre :

And tired Ixion on his wheel
A respite was allowed to steal,
 Enchanted by the strain ;
And Sisyphus found welcome rest
His stone from rolling to the crest
 With never-ending toil ;
While Tantalus forgot his thirst,
Though Hades' streams their limits burst
 In overwhelming flood.
The Furies, who in Hell enforced
King Pluto's harsh decrees, were lost
 In wonderment profound ;
And even the Fates, those dames of awe,
Were speechless struck as Orpheus o'er
 The strings his fingers swept.
And forth the tones mellifluous rolled,
To list to which unmoved and cold
 Could none of mortal birth.
Unused the shears and distaff laid
Its ceaseless round the spindle stayed,
 And for the briefest space.
No longer Atropos the thread
Of life divided, nor the dead
 Recruited from the quick ;
And as upon the assembly stole
The sounds, as though from Heaven, no soul
 In Pluto's dark domain
But to its utmost core was thrilled,
And thoughts beyond expression filled
 These dwellers in the Shades.
The lost—condemned in lowest Hell
Among the most depraved to dwell,
 And hear their blasphemies,
When on their ears the accents fell,
As mournful as a passing bell
 In its sad melody—

Revived, though dulled by years of pain
And punishment, the longings vain
 Of youth and innocence.
To Orpheus' heart the music brings,
As from the past on memory's wings,
 A flood of bitter thoughts—
Of times ere happiness had fled,
When he Eurydice had wed,
 Who loved him for his art,
And they beguiled the joyous hours
With song and lute, and crowned with flowers
 Each for the other plucked,
And life was not what now it seems,
A sunless world of vanished dreams,
 Where waking brought despair,
And showed it but a hollow jest,
From which was gone its only zest,
 His loved Eurydice !
When looking back he lost his bride,
And she was hurried from his side
 And never more was seen,
Disconsolate he left the spot,
And lived in lonely mount and grot,
 And so he wandered on,
Avoiding contact with his race,
Until he reached the land of Thrace,
 Whose maids and matrons he,
As elsewhere all along the route,
Entranced with music from his lute,
 Life's only solace left ;
But their advances he repaid
With cutting coldness, so 'twas said,
 Which brought about his end,
For when their love was turned to hate,
Their wounded pride to satiate
 They tore him limb from limb.

To wake the chords of love and joy,
Or sorrow's cadences employ
Was equally his gift,
Who scaled the heights of human weal
And made the most abandoned feel
A pleasure long unknown,
And plumbed no less the depths of woe,
And caused the fount of tears to flow
As ne'er it did before !
'Tis music, that divinest gift,
Which thus alone our souls can lift
From earth's dull round of cares,
Transporting us in ecstasy
To fairy realms beyond the sky
While bound beneath its spells,
Whose sway, as Orpheus' story tells,
Our troubles here below dispels
And happiness affords.
Inspiring every mood in turn—
To melt us now, and then to burn.
In perfect harmony !
The *Orpheus*, so renowned in song,
When Newcome had command, among
Our frigates was renowned,
And Cochin captured from the Dutch.
With all their ports as far as Cutch
On India's western strand,
And forged a link in England's chain
Of sovereignty upon the main
When she Malacca won,
And now no point, howe'er remote,
But sees the Union Jack afloat
As symbol of our power,
And all the earth is girdled round
At evening gunfire with the sound
Of fife and tuck of drum !

XIX.

This chronicle of ships began
With one by every Englishman
Beyond all others loved,
And so 'twere well that it should end,
And thus the *Victory's* prestige lend
To my untutored muse.
Than her none swifter sailed the sea
Or presages of victory
In every breast inspired,
As outward bound, with anchor weighed,
She readily the helm obeyed
Beneath the steersman's hand,
When, whip-like, bent each yard and mast
As sail was spread to catch the blast,
And tautened brace and sheet,
And heeling to the favouring wind,
She left her consorts far behind
To follow in her wake !
What scenes her peopled decks have shown,
What mem'ries have her timbers known
Since first the *Victory*
Was from the dockyard launched complete,
The cynosure of all the fleet
And of each landsman's eye,
Her race of glory to renew
And all her stirring past outdo
By deeds without compare.
When summer airs sighed soft and low,
Or winter's gales brought ice and snow,
Like sentry at his post,
Blockading one or other port—
As Lorient, Brest, Toulon, Rochefort,
Or Cadiz and Ferrol—

The grand old battle-ship was seen
E'er resting on the wave serene,
As might an albatross
When poised upon the wing on high,
Or stormy petrel when the sky
Portends a hurricane.
And here a passing glance I'd give
To those whose manly virtues live
In story and in song,
And picture Jack's peculiar ways
In England's halcyon naval days,
When war raged ceaselessly,
And he was foremost to oppose
The "wooden shoes," or French "sabots,"
Which conquest typified.
And, holding of the sea command,
Was guardian angel of the land,
Which loved and trusted him.
How would they—when along the line
The *Victory* showed the wished-for sign,
"Blue Peter" at the fore,
(Which meant "Prepare for Sea" to all)—
Behold the bunting, in a ball
Tight folded at the main,
The quicker at the word to fall
Above the tapering mast and tall
In streams of varied hue,
As though inviting to a feast,
And not to death, or wounds at least,
If haply they returned.
And when she fired the warning gun,
Of those who heard the sound, no one
But stood in readiness,
And as aloft the signal ran,
"All hands make sail," how every man
Would nimbly "spring his luff!"

What happiness the welcome news
Among the topmen would diffuse,
Now racing merrily
Along the ratlines up the shrouds,
In jostling but good-humoured crowds,
Until they reached the tops,
Whence "laying out" along the spars,
They loosed the sails—these jolly tars!—
Which then were "sheeted home"
By those who stood below, and thus,
Without confusion, noise, or fuss,
The *Victory* put to sea!
Now radiant dreams of war arise,
The rapture tempered by the sighs
Of fair ones left behind,
Until revive fresh hopes of prize,
Though Jack, soft-hearted, vainly tries
To stifle gentler thoughts,
And dwells upon the time when Sue
Would welcome him, as all the crew
Were sent "on liberty;"
And ardent would the embraces be
He'd give the lass, and jewellery
Her buxom charms to deck!
When signals for the battle fly,
All eagerly their utmost try
The other ships to excel,
And guns' crews with each other vie
In bringing with rapidity
Their broadside fire to bear,
And fiercely work their cannon till
With blinding smoke the decks they fill,
Which screens the foe from view,
While all the metal hotly glows,
And freely in the quarters flows
The blood of England's best.

And now the hostile fire grows slack,
And comes the time (as flat aback
The after-sails are thrown)
For all the boarders to attack,
And when the call is made no lack
Is there of volunteers ;
But as below the word is passed,
All hands rejoice to hear at last
The welcome order given,
And barely has it ceased to ring,
Ere up the ladders nimbly spring
The eager mariners,
Of whom each carries in his hand
A boarding pike or gleaming brand,
With pistol stock in belt.
The gangways scarce can hold the crowd,
Whose lusty cheers re-echo loud
Above the battle's din,
As caring naught for wounds or death,
They set their teeth and draw no breath
Till, vaulting o'er the side,
They stand upon the hostile deck,
And, rushing forward, know no check
Until the fo'c'sle's gained,
When driven aloft, or down below,
Or overboard, the conquered foe
Haul down the foreign flag !
Within her walls had thousands dwelt,
Some who their first gunpowder smelt,
And some their last, on board,
When journeying to that distant bourne
From whence no traveller may return
Or news of him be heard !
Ye gallant souls ! now wandering ghosts
On Stygian shores, what country boasts
A race compared with thee ?

Ne'er England may expect to see
Such tars as made the *Victory*
Renowned in olden times,
Though other crews were brave as they
And in the hour of battle gay
As Rupert's cavaliers,
While all victorious were alike
And none were ever known to strike
Save to o'erwhelming force !

XX.

Oh, reader ! canst thou then refuse
Thy meed of praise (although my muse
May seem presumptuous)
Unto the admirals, ships, and crews
Who have for England fought from Sluys
To Nile and Tráfalgår ?
But Time, which all on earth devours,
May yet of this fair land of ours
Write *Fuit*, or perhaps
The foe may camp on British soil,
And us of hoarded wealth despoil
And even of liberty.
'Tis madness trusting to the past,
As when the die for war is cast
Prestige will not avail
The country from defeat to save,
But may the medium be t' enslave
Her too confiding sons,
Unless superiority
In battle-ships and cruisers we
Can count upon as ours,
Surpassing all in power of gun,
With well-drilled crews to man each one,
And speed and handiness.

Possessing these success is sure,
Without, the past will only lure
The country to its doom !
What though we've wealth beyond compare,
And colonies possess which are
The envy of the world,
And commerce boast of such extent
This 'tis o'er all pre-eminent,
As jealous rivals own,—
Unless we hold the seas, one day
All like a dream will pass away
When sleepers are aroused,
And rude will be the awakening
Should e'er neglect disaster bring
Upon the British fleet,
For, as Lord Howard said of yore,
"Economy afloat and war
Have no affinity."
But men—'tis men we chiefly need !
And useless are the ships, indeed,
Without their British crews,
And folly 'tis new ships to build,
Unless, when launched, they can be filled
With trained and seasoned hands,
For seamen like the old A.B.—
A man from boyhood bred at sea—
Is what the country lacks,
And foreigners, and all the scum
Of seaport towns, when troubles come,
Will leave us in the lurch,
And England, wanting a Reserve*
(In fact, not name) at sea to serve
On board her ships-of-war,

* The whole Naval Reserve of 25,000 men would be required to man the existing ships, and there is no second line to fall back upon, except the Mercantile Marine, which is manned by 80,000 men, who, by the

Will surely meet disaster great,
Which must to ruin lead the State,
Complete and past repair!
When comes the day, if come it must,
When lie our dockyards in the dust
And all our arsenals,
When England's ironclads are rust
And gone or slain their crews, we trust
It may be said of them :—
“The Navy battled to the last
And nailed its colours to the mast,
As oft in happier times.”
Ormûz and Tyre have ceased to be,
And Carthage, once supreme at sea,
Has left no stone behind ;
Stands Tadmor in a desert waste,
And long decay in eager haste
Has seized Persepolis ;
Alone of mighty Babylon
One crumbling tower is seen upon
The plain to mark its site ;
Whilst Tigris' broad and turbid flood
Sweeps past where Ctesiphon once stood
And flourished Nineveh,
Though mounds are only left of one,
And Cyrus' Arch of Ctesiphon*
Is all that now remains !

removal of the Naval Reserve and the foreigners (27,000), would be reduced to 28,000, a large proportion of whom are incompetent. Thus the service on which we depend for our food supplies would be paralysed. To remedy this evil, immediate steps should be taken by reviving the apprentice system, and stationing training-ships at all our ports, and enlisting boys in adequate numbers.

* The writer has stood on the “Tauk Kesra,” or Arch of Cyrus, the sole remains of the great city, whose sack has been so vividly described by Gibbon.

Of England shall it then be said,
Eternally she rears her head
 Though Empires rise and fall?
But why should we our voices raise,
Cassandra-like, or in dispraise
 Of aught existing speak?
Take matters easy! For the rest
All mundane things are for the best
 In this the best of worlds—
So have philosophers agreed
Who hold the optimistic creed,
 Which I'll not controvert,
But end this story of the sea,
This plain, unvarnished history,
 And only add—Farewell!

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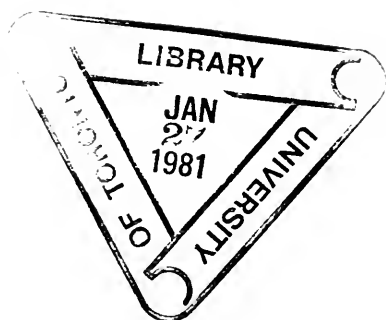
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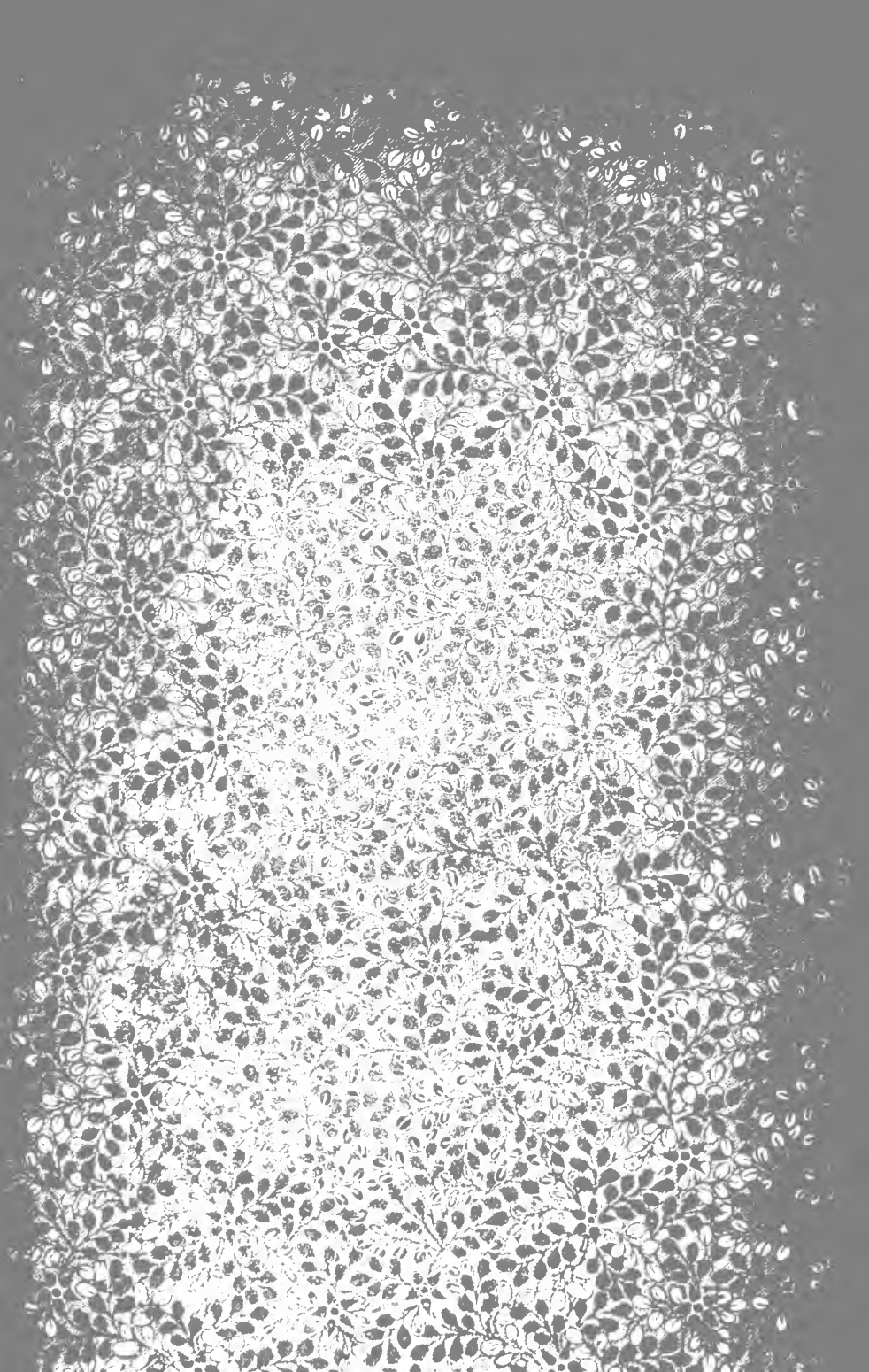






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